



# LINK member baselines survey: Equality, Diversity and Inclusions policies and procedures: March 2021

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## Introduction

In March 2021, Scottish Environment LINK members took part in a survey to assess progress and levels of confidence in developing and implementing equality, diversity and inclusion measures in their work. The survey provides a baseline to measure future progress and the results will inform a funding bid for support to provide the requirements in training and support as identified.

LINK has 41 members in March 2021, 66% of whom responded to this survey. These members employ more than 1,500 FTE staff; work with more than 5,500 volunteers and have memberships in 2020 of more than 550,000. Between them, they provide more than 1,000 days of training to staff and volunteers per month. They own and manage 100, 494 ha of land in Scotland, own a further 45,000 ha that is managed by others and directly manage over 18,000 ha of land on behalf of others. 50% of responses to this survey were from organisations based in Scotland and 50% from organisations based in the UK. 50% classed themselves as small organisations, 27% as medium and 12% as large.

Members of Scottish Environment LINK are at different stages in their journeys on equality, diversity and inclusion in Scotland. Since October 2020, several member CEOs and senior staff have met to share and compare progress and learning within their organisations and to help start to scope a programme of activity that could help support all LINK member bodies in identifying and addressing issues on equality, diversity and inclusion.



Part 1 of this survey aims to build a baseline survey of where the sector currently stands in relation to ethnicity, age, gender and disability, in staff teams, volunteers and members. Part 2 aims to explore levels of understanding and confidence amongst members in relation to the Equality Act 2010 and its implementation at work.

## Key findings

### Data on diversity:

48% of respondents gather data on staff diversity. 81% offered estimates of diversity amongst their staff team and results indicate that in terms of age and gender, organisations are diverse. However, diversity in ethnicity and disability is lower.

The Boards of organisations who responded followed a similar pattern: diversity levels in age and gender are high but again lower in ethnicity and disability.

For volunteers, only 26% have any mechanisms in place to assess volunteer diversity. Of those, gender diversity is high but age, ethnicity and disability diversity levels lower.

For memberships, only 5% have a mechanism to assess diversity. These are Scottish parts of larger UK wide organisations. Such low levels of data collection mean we cannot assess membership diversity at this point.

### Confidence and compliance

61% of respondents have a senior level individual or working group taking the lead in this area of work. 78% also have policies and guidance in place, or in draft, on equality, diversity and inclusion. 22% have none at this stage. 80% of respondents have an Equal Opportunities policy (or equivalent) in place to guide compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and a further 10% have such policies in draft.

In terms of training, 10% of respondents provide regular training on EDI, with a further 30% providing training but not on a regular basis. 35% are planning to start providing such training.

Confidence levels in the implementation and integration of equality and diversity considerations into daily work is medium to low. Very few respondents have high levels of confidence in any of the aspects explored. The highest levels of confidence come from the larger organisations, or those who have been working in this area for longer than others. The lowest levels of confidence are around using equality impact assessments, integrating a human rights approach and including carers.

48%	Of respondents collect data on staff diversity; 81% were able to estimate diversity.
26%	Of respondents collect data on volunteer diversity
5%	Of respondents collect data on membership diversity
Gender diversity	Is generally balanced
Age diversity	Is balanced within staff teams, less so on Boards and not very diverse in volunteers
Ethnic diversity	Is generally low in staff, board and volunteers
Disability diversity	Is low amongst staff and board teams and largely unknown amongst volunteers and memberships.



61%	Have senior levels individuals or a working group taking the lead on EDI
54%	Have policies and procedures in place; 22% had policies and procedures in draft
22%	have no policies or procedures in place at this stage
80%	Have an equal opportunities policy in place; a further 10% have a policy in draft
40%	Provide EDI training on regular or irregular basis. Further 35% are planning to start.
Medium to low	Confidence levels in implementing and integrating EDI measures and approaches
Data	Data collection levels are very low and need improvement.
Progress	Progress, where measurable, is being made on age and gender, but ethnicity and disability diversity is proving much harder
100% support	for a programme that would support member development and progress in EDI

## Responses received

66% of LINK's 41 members in 2021 responded to this survey. The survey was anonymous, although respondents were able to give contact details where they were willing to share their experience and findings with others. The survey was completed by 11 anonymous responses (41%): the remaining respondents covered the range of LINK membership, in terms of organisation size, governance structure – some are entirely volunteer led, others have paid staff and they work across all areas of interest from nature and landscape conservation, species conservation, marine issues, access, heritage and wider environmental and social issues. All members have responded to this survey as organisations operating in Scotland.

A full list of LINK members can be found [here](#).



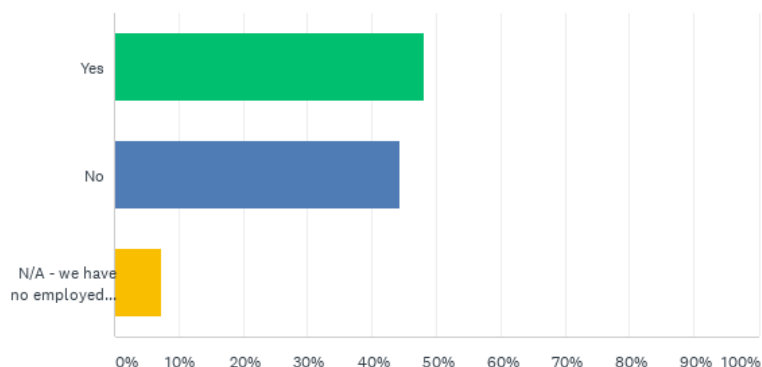
## Analyses of responses:

### Section 1: data collection and extent of knowledge

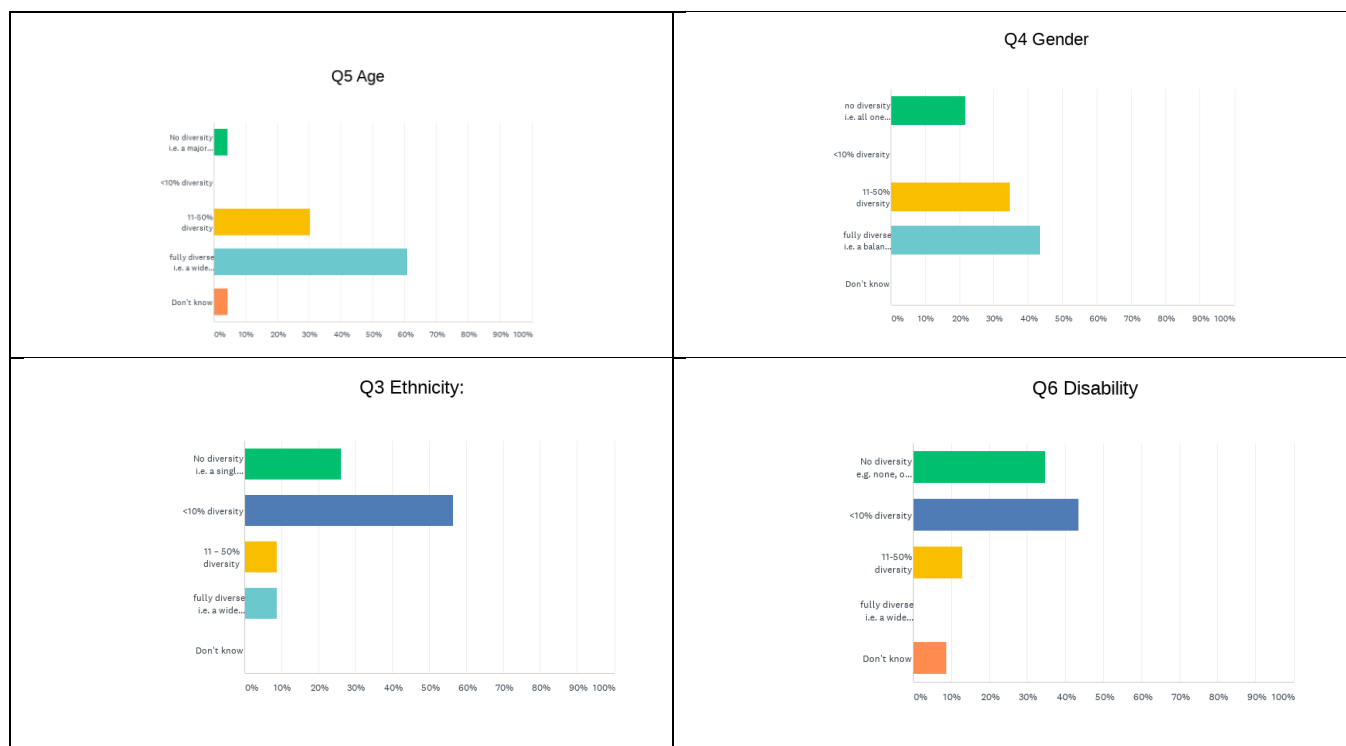
#### 1.1 Diversity of staff teams

Almost half of respondents collect data on staff directly. Two respondents do not employ staff.

Q1 Q1: In terms of ethnicity, gender, disability and age, do you collect data to measure the diversity of your staff team?

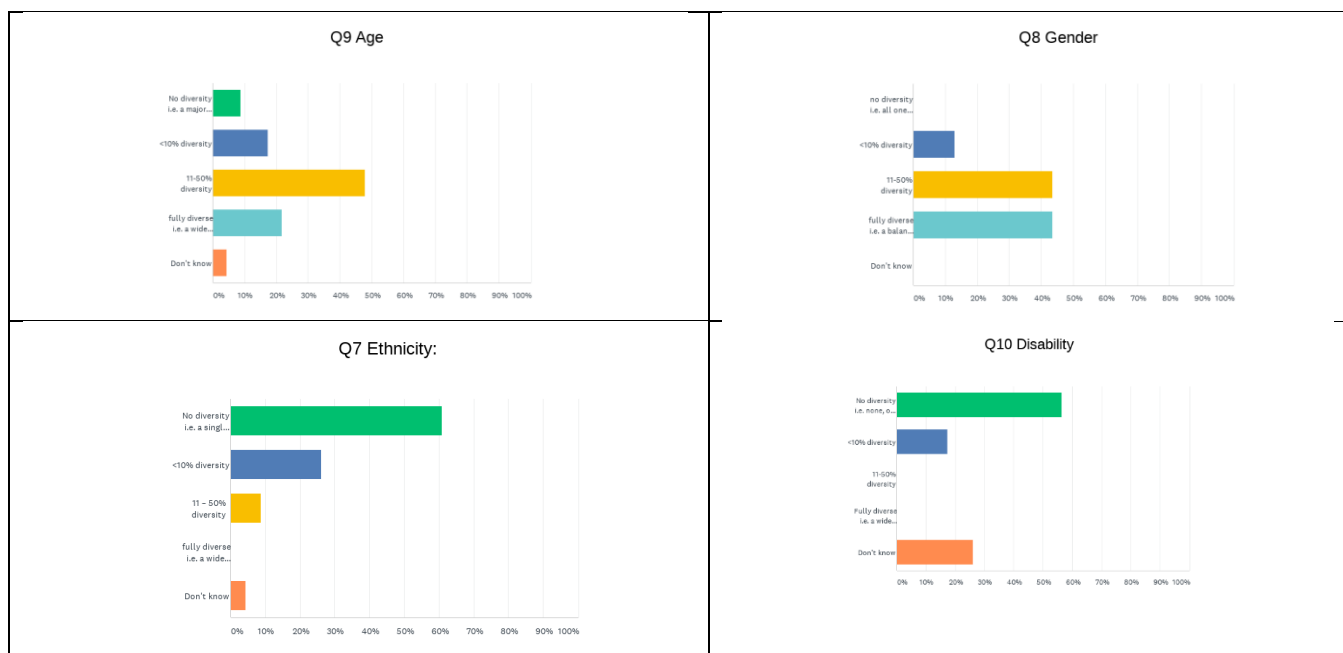


81% were able to estimate the diversity of their staff team. Age and gender diversity are generally balanced. Ethnicity and disability are much less balanced.

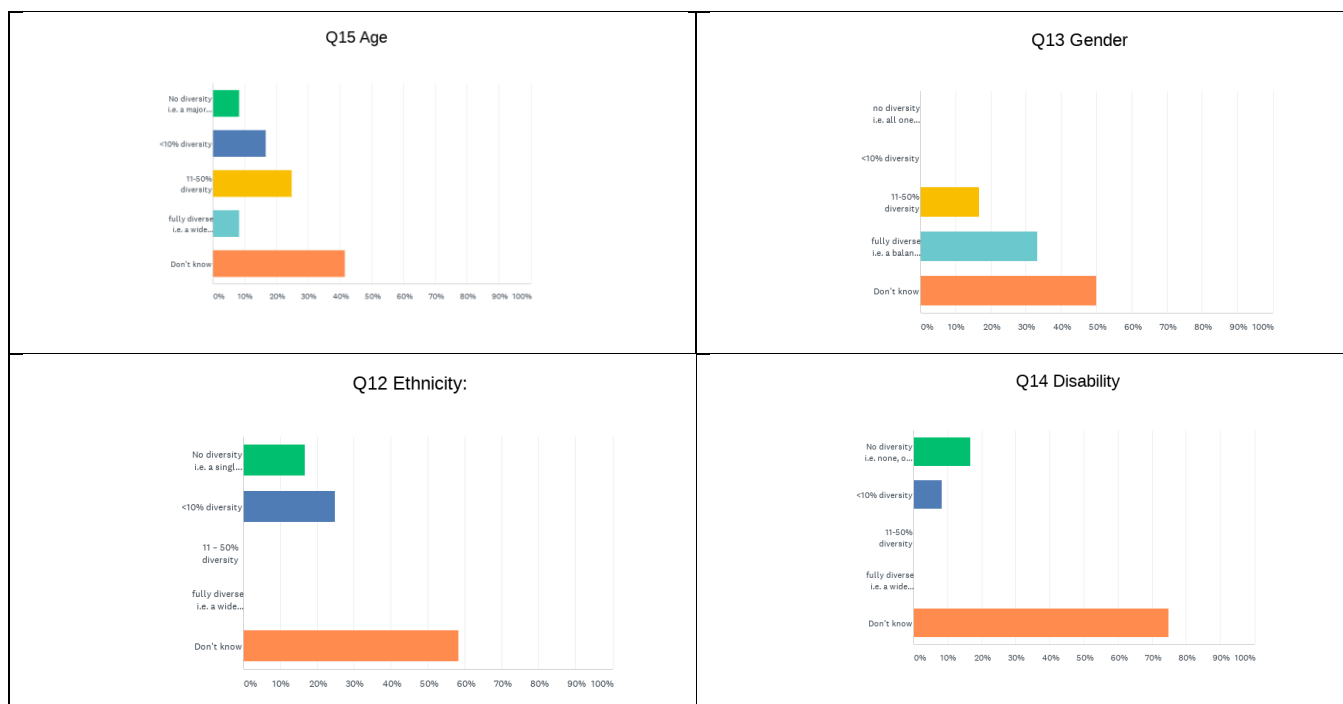




In terms of Board diversity, gender is generally well balanced, and age slightly less so. Ethnicity and disability diversity in Boards are generally low.

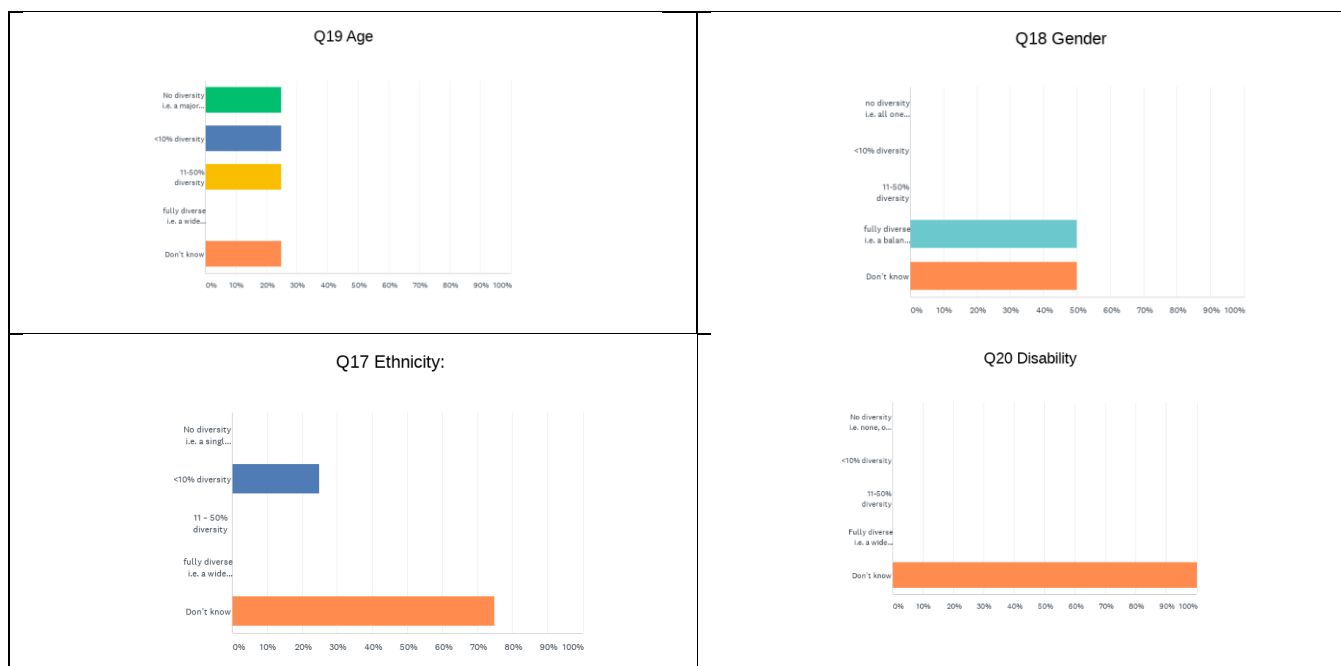


Only 26% of respondents have mechanisms to record the diversity of their volunteers and the percentage of unknowns is high for both volunteers and members as a result. Of those that do have a mechanism, gender diversity is generally balanced, age less so, and ethnicity and disability not balanced at all. This is based on very low levels of data.





Only 5% of respondents have mechanisms in place to assess the diversity of their membership. These very low levels of data mean it is not possible to assess the diversity of memberships.



## 1.2 Leadership

61% of respondents have a senior level individual or working group taking the lead in this area of work. 56% also have policies and guidance in place on equality, diversity and inclusion with a further 22% with policies and procedures in draft. 22% have none at this stage. 12 member bodies offered to share their policies and procedures with others in the network. These offers come from a range of member types: large and small, UK and Scotland based. 36% have set up mechanisms to enable inclusion within the organisation: these included staff led groups and frameworks, some assisted by external expertise.

## 1.3 Lessons to share

Members were asked to offer any lessons that might help other members who are setting out on their EDI journey. These included the following:

Needs: Senior leadership Time, resource Staff involvement in co-creation of key elements
We've appointed the consultancy Full Colour to work with us to improve EDI, have developed a draft Action Plan for Scotland and are awaiting Board and Trustee approval of additional recommendations/actions after June. Full Colour are also currently undertaking a second phase of work for us focusing specifically on ethnic diversity as this is the area we have made least progress on - gender, self-declared disability KPIs area all green but ethnic diversity remains firmly in the red.
Make sure that you are doing equality, diversity and inclusion work within your workforce, as well as your external facing work. If your staff don't have the confidence to talk about identities and the importance of identity in helping us perform at our best, it is highly likely that they will also not give it the importance and attention it deserves when serving in your public-facing roles.
Get trustees on board early



It's hard work, and raises all types of questions and feelings and you're going to get it wrong. But to not try because of that is worse. The landscape is changing and worth getting a younger viewpoint where possible as they are more likely to be active advocates and can give the perspectives of the language and support that can work. Looking into how to perform Equality Impact Assessments and applying that process across all work areas can help get everyone thinking about how activities can be structured to be inclusive.

Engage with BAME leaders and communities at the beginning of the process, not at the end.

We're at the beginning of our journey. Drafting a policy was a natural first step and has gone for board approval, while a stakeholder audit exercise has helped clarify three key actions through to June, specifically to put in place an action plan, targets and metrics and outline the long-term investment (capacity and resources) required. The outputs from those actions will inform the creation of a working group.

We have actively sought to recruit a very young Patron and a very young Trustee from ethnic backgrounds. However we have ensured that they do have a keen interest in nature conservation and particularly in our cause.

## 1.4 Organisation scale

50% of respondents were based in a Scotland based organisation and 50% in a UK wide one. 50% of respondents classed themselves as small, with fewer than 10 members of staff in Scotland, 27% were medium, with 11 – 99 members of staff in Scotland and 12% were large with more than 100 members of staff in Scotland.

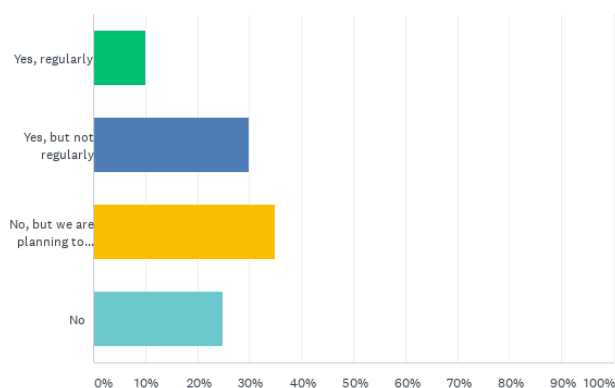
## Section 2: Confidence in implementation and compliance with legal frameworks

### 2.1 Equality Act (2010)

When asked how confident respondents were in their understanding of and confidence in implementing the Equality Act 2010, protected characteristics, prohibited behaviours, and specific duties for Scotland, confidence levels are generally very high except for very small organisations led either by volunteers or a small part time staff team. 80% of respondents had an Equal Opportunities policy (or equivalent) in place to guide compliance with the Equality Act 2010. A further 10% had such policies in draft. 10% had nothing at this stage.

In terms of training, 10% of respondents provided regular training on EDI, with a further 30% providing training but not on a regular basis. 35% were planning to start providing such training.

Q31 Does your organisation provide regular training on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion?





## 2.2 Confidence levels on implementation and development

The survey asked respondents to rate their levels of confidence in the following:

- Integrate equality and diversity considerations into employment and volunteering
- Integrate equality and diversity considerations into activity design and delivery
- Use accessible and inclusive design and communication
- Involve the whole range of diverse people in your activities
- Use co-production to design and deliver activities
- Challenge stereotyping and prejudice
- Address unconscious bias
- Use Equality Impact Assessments
- Understand and apply Human rights frameworks and approaches
- Integrate a human rights approach into service, project, and work design and delivery
- Take account of poverty and issues facing different socio-economic groups
- Address Intersectionality (issues facing and approaches to addressing these in relation to people with more than one protected characteristics)
- Include Carers (people who provide unpaid care or support to a family member or friend) in your activities

Average confidence scores on all these questions were in the middle, with some knowledge and confidence. None of these scored consistently high levels of confidence across the network.

Slightly lower levels of confidence were recorded for:

- Involve the whole range of diverse people in your activities
- Address unconscious bias
- Use Equality Impact Assessments
- Understand and apply Human rights frameworks and approaches
- Integrate a human rights approach into service, project, and work design and delivery
- Address Intersectionality (issues facing and approaches to addressing these in relation to people with more than one protected characteristics)
- Include Carers (people who provide unpaid care or support to a family member or friend) in your activities

## 2.3 Interest in a programme to support development and progress on EDI

There was 100% support for a programme that would support member development and progress on EDI issues and commitment to take part.

Comments on issues raised in this survey included:

Our organisation is very much starting out with this work and recognises that it may take a number of years to fully integrate and bring about the above points into our everyday activities. While we have scored quite low in the above points, there is a dedication and commitment within our senior leadership and throughout our workforce to get to a point where we could mark ourselves as 5 or over 90% in those questions that used percentages.

The nature of our operations means we have some parts where we would score more highly, especially in relation to engagement and education activities, but overall my rankings are more reflective of the wider considerations across all aspects of our work.





1) It's easier for us to tackle some diversity issues than others - we've made good progress on age and gender but ethnicity and disability will be much more difficult 2) We simply don't know the diversity of our members, as we didn't ask relevant questions when they joined - we are fairly certain they are mostly elderly and a mix of male and female but we have no information on their disability or ethnicity

### Section 3: next steps

This initial survey serves as a baseline against which future progress on these issues can be measured. Given the low levels of confidence in implementing and including policies and procedures relating to equality, diversity and inclusion, LINK is now preparing a bid for funding to support provision of the training and support to enable LINK members to become more inclusive and better equipped to improve our equality and diversity. Diversity makes organisations stronger and LINK members are keen to improve diversity within the sector so that together we can achieve more for Scotland's environment.

This short film from RSPB Scotland illustrates the issues we face as a sector in Scotland and underlines the need and ambition to work together, make better and faster progress:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VC8a\\_RWV0tI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VC8a_RWV0tI)

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