

## Meeting Notes- Wildlife Group meeting 27<sup>th</sup> October (15:00am-17:00pm) via Zoom

**Attendees-** Juliet Caldwell (LINK), Alistair Whyte (Plantlife), Nora Casey (RSPB Scotland), Suzie Saunders (Woodland Trust), Amber Connett (CIEEM), Vhairi Tollan (LINK), Eddie Palmer (Scottish Badgers), Rachael Cooper-Bohannon (ARC), Deborah Long (LINK), Gus Jones (BSCG)

**Chaired by** – Alistair Whyte (Plantlife)

**Apologies** – Helen Taylor (RZSS), Craig Macadam (Buglife), Paul Walton (RSPB), Natalie Stevenson (Buglife), Sarah Dolman (WDC), Katie O'Donnell (KSB)

### Summary of Actions for 27<sup>th</sup> October Wildlife Group meeting

Action No.	Action	To be actioned by	Status
1.	Invite Lloyd to discuss Rhetoric to Reality report.	Juliet	November

#### 1. General Updates

##### a. Acceptance of Previous Minutes & Review of Actions

Previous meeting minutes accepted, and actions updated.

##### b. Meetings Attended

- Alistair attended a meeting with the Cairngorms National Park, and they have just employed a new RLUP officer.
- Amber said Annie has been doing a series of meetings with ScotGov ministers and officials – Mercedes Villalba, Peter Phillips, Lisa McCann, Mark Ruskell, and several others. Main topics discussed – linking nature and climate, NBS, nature targets and Nature Networks, skills development and environmental management, Dasgupta review, improving biodiversity in the transport network, and NPF4.
- Suzie said the Woodland Trust have had meetings with Paul McLennan. He is going to a tree planting event and then a community tree planting event the next day. Suzie has a meeting with Miles Briggs in a couple weeks' time to go over NPF4.
- Plantlife & Woodland Trust did a fringe event at Scottish Greens conference – Saving Scotland's Rainforest. Full room and good engagement in discussion. Ariane Burgess chaired and was a speaker. All linked via SSR trying to get a dedicated restoration fund for the rainforest based on the Peatlands Action model but for INNS and rhododendron removal, deer control etc. They have developed a big proposal to take to SG to get them to commit to these. Now both in manifesto and PfG but needing action now.
- Bruce has a meeting with Lorna Slater on RLUP. If RLUPs continue to be so underfunded and incoherent then NGOs won't be happy about contributing time to it. Cairngorms – the 2 National Parks have a good handle on RLUPs.

- Vhairs, Bruce and Patrick are working on an SNP fringe event for the end of November about biodiversity and economics.
  - RSPB had a meeting with Lorna Slater, golden eagle champion, at the Moffat Golden Eagle festival. She is interested in the biodiversity plan refresh next year. She is well aware that her portfolio is strange – responsibility but very little power. She said if she can get lots of hard-hitting things into the biodiversity refresh then she can use it to crack open other people’s portfolios. John Muir Trust and SRSB were there as well.

## 2. JNCC Quinquennial Review meeting

- RSPB have put in a couple of PQs on QQR but still waiting on response.
- Bruce put PQs in from Alexander Burnett (Red Squirrel Nature Champion) – same response from JNCC & NatureScot but is important to get it higher up their agenda.
- Paul sent email to JNCC with list of concerns around lack of consultation. The response escalated in its tone. The consensus was they consulted NGOs because this had gone through one organisation down south.
- [PQ on QQR](#) - The Scottish Government is committed to enhancing biodiversity and to protecting vulnerable species in Scotland.
  - Following the conclusion of the seventh Quinquennial Review the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) will submit recommendations for potential changes to the animals and plants listed under schedules 5 and 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, to the UK Government and the devolved administrations. The Scottish Government will carefully consider any recommendations made by the JNCC. However, before deciding whether to make any changes to the animals listed under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, we would have to be satisfied that in doing so there would be no detrimental impact to either the individual species or to the wider biodiversity and environmental landscape in Scotland.
- Suzie asked what the issue was with the QQR. Bruce explained there had been multiple problems – improper consultation, the way to approach this problem, the definitions of the IUCN list and the data not being there, it is not in line with climate and nature crises being fast moving.

## 3. Update on biodiversity process

- Deborah and Paul had a meeting organised with NatureScot to discuss NGO involvement in the next SBS. This has been postponed to December.
- Deborah and Vhairs are meeting with Lorna Slater today (Wednesday) to discuss NatureScot and the need for them to provide leadership on the next SBS. LINK is aiming to set up quarterly meetings that the conveners can bid for.
- LINK currently have quarterly meetings with both Mairi Gougeon and Mairi McAllan.

## Agriculture consultation

- Another strategy moving forward without an SBS. LINK have put together [suggested responses](#) to the consultation.

### a. Post 2020 biodiversity delivery

### b. State of Nature Partnership

## (Update from Craig)

- I attended the State of Nature meeting on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> Oct. This meeting was mostly about exploring the appetite for a new report and what it might contain. The timing of the report was discussed. On the current cycle it would be due in 2022 however some present felt that it should be delayed until 2023 to be published closer to the expected UK General Election in 2024.
- There was also discussion over the role of the report. The Statutory Agencies are onboard from the start this time (David O'Brien represented NatureScot). They are keen to ensure that the report remains impartial, and evidence based as any lobbying in the report would likely mean that they couldn't sign up. There was good agreement around this, that the report should be about presenting the facts that partners could then use in their own advocacy.
- The cost of producing the report was discussed – I can't remember the detail, but it is very costly! LINK's contribution to the previous report was acknowledged. I don't know the outcome of that discussion though as I left at that point.
- Discussion around who led on the previous State of Nature report. Coordinated across organisations around the UK. Nora pointed out it is hosted on the NBN website.
- If the expected time of the UK election is part of the decision making – RSPB have been hearing rumours about a UK election in 2023.
- Gus asked if there could be a section in new State of Nature report about the state of nature in National Parks. The Cairngorms Campaign might be able to put some funds in to it. Alistair suggested feeding that back to Craig or Paul. Cairngorms are doing their own 'state of the Cairngorms' report.

## 4. [Review work plan 2022](#)

The group went through the work plan to update actions and milestones.

## 5. Update on targets work

From Juliet

### COP15 update

- China have officially taken presidency from Egypt. Part one was high level and included the adoption of the [Kunming Declaration](#) which is a bit of a lack luster document as it isn't very specific and doesn't push ambition further forward. It is more of a neutral document that brings all the countries together.
- However, the final document does include reference to the 2030 mission tagline as well as recognition of 30 by 30 which the draft did not.
- The leaders' summit was an interesting selection of leaders. E.g., Putin talking about biodiversity and getting Russia more involved. UK and France were the last two to speak which was interesting posturing. Prince Charles gave leaders' summit speech for the UK which was positive.
- Next steps – CBD negotiations in January (12<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> January) and final negotiations in April/May in Kunming next year.

- 30x30 - The January negotiations will deal with the target text and will still have to negotiate protected areas target. The draft does include 30x30 but that is just one element. South Africa e.g., want less than 30% protected. India have just signed up to 30x30. It will be interesting to see if other big countries follow.
- Helpful blog by Georgina and Fiona from RSPB on what happened over part one - <https://www.wcl.org.uk/a-global-agreement-for-nature.asp>

## ELUK

- Putting together final report – acting as a summary for the complementary briefings (30x30, MERV, targets and four country coordination) to be published after COP26 in December. The report will include a short punchy set of global expectations/priorities and then the rest is about grounding it domestically.
- Discussion around the report advocacy and who we send it to – ScotLINK are keen to keep it to NGOs who are looking for a UK-wide overview as well as NatureScot and to JNCC as ELUK.
- Juliet’s ELUK work will be wrapping up soon as and will be focusing on wider advocacy within ScotLINK.
- However, it was suggested that it would be useful for pre or just after COP26 to get a similar group together to have conversation about CBD strategy for the next 6 months and how we are going to use it – let Juliet know if you would be interested in joining these conversations.

## SPICe briefing on COP15

- Talks about the state of nature in Scotland, COP15 and how we can learn from failed 2020 targets, biodiversity mainstreaming and funding nature.

## 6. Nature Champions

- 55 MSPs signed up so far. Most recent site visit was Meghan Gallacher visiting Argaty Red Kites with SRSG and RSPB.
- Nature Champions Back Biodiversity social media initiative over part one of COP15 – Juliet put together infographics for 10 species and habitats with facts as to how they maintain ecosystem function & making the nature climate link. 13 MSPs engaged. [Blog published](#) summarising the initiative and includes photos of tweets from MSPs and links to the infographics – will keep that up there until part two of COP15.

## 7. AOB

### Juliet updated the group on COP26 plans

#### Bio bloc

- The Global Day of Action, November 6.
- On this day, there will be marches in cities around the world, including in 10 cities in the UK.
- The Glasgow March is being organised by the COP26 Coalition and will be divided into several interest blocs, including a Biodiversity Bloc for Nature.
- It would be great if you could take part in this!
- They can bring placards, dress up like creatures, support your organisation and share messages for nature- we will also have two giant puppets, musicians, and some bikes with TVs as part of the blocs.
- RSPB Scotland, SE Link, WWF, the Wildlife Trusts, the Woodland Trust, and a few others have come together to help organise this bloc,

- Here is an Eventbrite to direct your organisation members and supporters to. Please share this in your communications with your members as we get ready for COP26. - <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/cop26-global-day-of-action-march-join-the-bio-bloc-tickets-187597799067>

#### **LINK CoP26 planner**

- LINK have put together a [google doc](#) to map LINK member's CoP26 activity. Please feel free to add to this if your organisation has organised any events/exhibitions/stalls as well as any helpful resources.
- This will hopefully be a useful tool to see what LINK members are up to over CoP26 as well as details on how to get involved. The LINK CoP26 planner will also be shared with 'Team Scotland' which is a group made up of NatureScot, ScotGov and eNGOs who have been meeting regularly to discuss CoP26 plans within Scotland.

#### **Nature of Scotland awards**

- Will be online and a good chance to showcase the amazing conservation work happening in Scotland.
- <https://www.rspb.org.uk/about-the-rspb/at-home-and-abroad/scotland/nature-of-scotland-awards/>