



<b>Subject:</b>	New Biodiversity Strategy for Northern Ireland – Pre Consultation Input
<b>Date:</b>	7 <sup>th</sup> December 2021
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<b>Restricted Reports</b>	
<b>Is this report restricted?</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?</b>	
<b>After Committee Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>After Council Decision</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Some time in the future</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Never</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Call-in</b>	
<b>Is the decision eligible for Call-in?</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues</b>
1.1	The purpose of the report is for Members to consider a pre consultation response to contribute to the development of the new Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
2.1	The Committee is asked to <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agree the draft pre consultation response and to note that there will be further opportunity to comment on the new NI Biodiversity Strategy at full consultation stage. Subject to Committee and Council Approval this response will be submitted to DAERA. The Department has not given an indicative date when the Strategy will be issued for consultation but officers will keep Members updated.</li></ul>
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Main report</b>
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	The previous Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 has now elapsed, and the Executive intends to develop a new Biodiversity Strategy to meet the challenges faced by the natural environment.

3.2	<p>The scientific evidence points to an on-going decline in global biodiversity; with that trend very much mirrored in Northern Ireland. Internationally the United Nations, through the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), is refocusing its intention on reducing the loss of biodiversity through a Global Biodiversity Framework.</p>
3.3	<p>In July 2021 the CBD published the first official draft of a new Global Biodiversity Framework to guide actions worldwide to preserve and protect nature and its essential services to people. Work is ongoing but it is likely that the framework will include the 21 strategic targets set out at Appendix 1</p>
3.4	<p>The framework includes targets for 2030 including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All land and sea areas globally are under integrated biodiversity-inclusive spatial planning addressing land- and sea-use change (Target 1).</li> <li>• At least 30% of global land and sea areas are conserved through effective protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (Target 3)</li> <li>• At least 50% reduction in the rate of introduction of invasive alien species, and controls or eradication of such species to eliminate or reduce their impacts (Target 6)</li> <li>• Reducing nutrients lost to the environment by at least half, and pesticides by at least two thirds, and eliminating the discharge of plastic waste (Target 7)</li> <li>• Nature-based contributions to global climate change mitigation efforts of least 10 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e per year, and that all mitigation and adaptation efforts avoid negative impacts on biodiversity (Target 8)</li> <li>• Increase the area of, access to, and benefits from green and blue spaces, for human health and well-being in urban areas and other densely populated areas (Target 12)</li> <li>• Integrate biodiversity values into policies, regulations, planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies, accounts, and assessments of environmental impacts at all levels of government and across all sectors of the economy (Target 14).</li> <li>• Redirecting, repurposing, reforming or eliminating incentives harmful for biodiversity, reducing them by at least \$US 500 billion per year (Target 18).</li> </ul>
3.5	<p>The CBD intends to get international agreement to the framework at the Council of the Parties meeting (CoP15) in May 2022 in China. The targets agreed at this summit will replace the 2020 biodiversity targets, many of which were not met.</p>
3.6	<p>In the meantime the four UK countries are refreshing their strategies, based on the draft framework. To assist with development of the new strategy DAERA has requested Council input and comment specifically in relation to strategic targets; 1, 3,6,12, and 14.</p>

3.7	<p>A draft response has been prepared at Appendix 2 but principal comments include the need for;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Robust Legislation and policies.</li> <li>2. Baseline data – the dearth of ecological data across most habitats and taxa prevents informed decision making and monitoring of trends especially at a local level due.</li> <li>3. Cessation of incentives which are damaging the natural environment.</li> <li>4. Adequate resources – Lack of investment on invasive alien species are currently estimated to cost £1.8 bn to the UK economy.</li> <li>5. Resources - There is a significant professional skills gap recognised by the sector.</li> <li>6. The new NI Biodiversity Strategy needs to SMART Targets with interim milestones, monitoring and be adequately resourced. Funding should be accessible to environmental organisations and Local Authorities.</li> <li>7. Mainstreaming Biodiversity - Collaboration across all sectors is required to deliver the outcomes.</li> <li>8. Reinstatement of Local Structures for example the NI Biodiversity Group and the Habitat and Species Action Plan Groups which brought together Government, eNGOs and the business sectors.</li> </ol>
3.8	<p>Subject to Committee and Council Approval this response will be submitted to DAERA. The Department has not given an indicative date when the Strategy will be issued for consultation but officers will keep Members updated.</p>
	<p><u>Financial &amp; Resource Implications</u></p>
3.9	<p>There are currently no financial implications.</p>
	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p>
3.10	<p>There are currently no equality or good relations implications.</p>
<b>4.0</b>	<p><b>Appendices – Documents Attached</b></p>
	<p>Appendix 1: Global Biodiversity Framework – Proposed Targets.</p>
	<p>Appendix 2: Draft BCC pre Consultation Response to new NI Biodiversity Strategy</p>