

Policy Tools and Legislative Frameworks in the UK

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What makes Northern Ireland special?

The geographical area of Northern Ireland totals 14,150 km², which is approximately 12% of the land area of island of Ireland and less than 6% of the UK. In addition it has a territorial sea area (to 12 miles) of 7,189 km², extending its physical boundaries by half. Both our land and marine environments contain a wide variety and diversity of natural and historic features which influence our human activities and opportunities.

Landscape

Our land area of 14,150 km² is only 6% of the UK and 12% of the island of Ireland but we have 130 distinct types of landscape.

World Heritage

The Giant's Causeway is a World Heritage site and attracts ¼ million visitors every year.

Climate and Energy

Northern Ireland is one of the windier parts of the UK, providing a source of renewable energy. It also has a considerable tidal current resource.

Geology

We are one of the most geologically diverse areas in the world from ancient sediments more than 600 million years old to glaciated valleys formed when ice retreated 14,000 years ago.

Marine and coastal

Our 650 km of coast line means there is nearly 1 metre of coastline to every household. We have a rich heritage of fishing, trading and tourism.

Built Heritage

There are over 9,000 historic buildings on our database and 16,000 sites and monuments records representing a rich and varied historic environment.

Wildlife

90% of the world's population of Light-bellied Brent Geese come to Strangford Lough every Autumn. In 2011 a record 38,000 Brent Geese were counted.

Soil

Peat accounts for some 14% of our soil cover and plays an important role in local land and resource use.

Freshwater

Lough Neagh at 412 km² is the largest fresh water lake in the British Isles.

Biodiversity

We have internationally recognised areas for special conservation and protection and designated 345 Areas of Special Scientific Interest recognising the quality of species and habitat.



Ministerial Commitment

UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework

Published by JNCC and Defra
on behalf of the Four Countries' Biodiversity Group



UK POST-2010 BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN JNCC November 2013

Failure is not an Option

For further information and documents relating to the Implementation plan visit:
<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-6583>

For further information about JNCC visit: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=1729>

A common purpose for the delivery of Aichi Targets by 2020

The purpose of this UK Biodiversity Framework is to set a broad enabling structure for action across the UK between now and 2020:

- i. To set out a shared vision and priorities for UK-scale activities, in a framework jointly owned by the four countries, and to which their own strategies will contribute.
- ii. To identify priority work at a UK level which will be needed to help deliver the Aichi targets and the EU Biodiversity Strategy.
- iii. To facilitate the aggregation and collation of information on activity and outcomes across all countries of the UK, where the four countries agree this will bring benefits compared to individual country work.
- iv. To streamline governance arrangements for UK-scale activity.

The vision for the CBD's *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020* is: 'By 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people'.

Fifth National Report to the United Nations
Convention on Biological Diversity:
United Kingdom

April 2014

Please cite as: JNCC, 2014. *Fifth National Report to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity: United Kingdom*. Peterborough: JNCC.

For further information about JNCC visit: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=1729>

Published Reports and Assessments

- The UK Biodiversity Indicators
- *The UK National Ecosystem Assessment (UK NEA)*
- European Habitats Directive Article 17 reporting
- *Charting Progress 2. The state of the UK seas.*

Policy statements and written submissions

- *The UK Biodiversity Framework and its published reports*
- Written contributions from the UK Government, the devolved administrations and the Governments of Overseas Territories (OTs) and Crown Dependencies (CDs), including the country biodiversity strategies.

Charting Progress 2

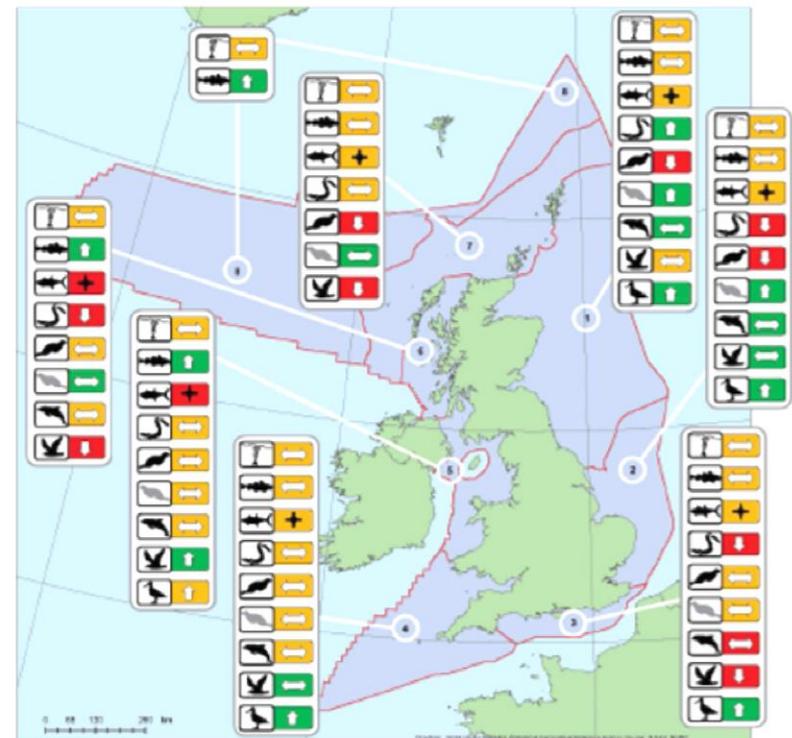
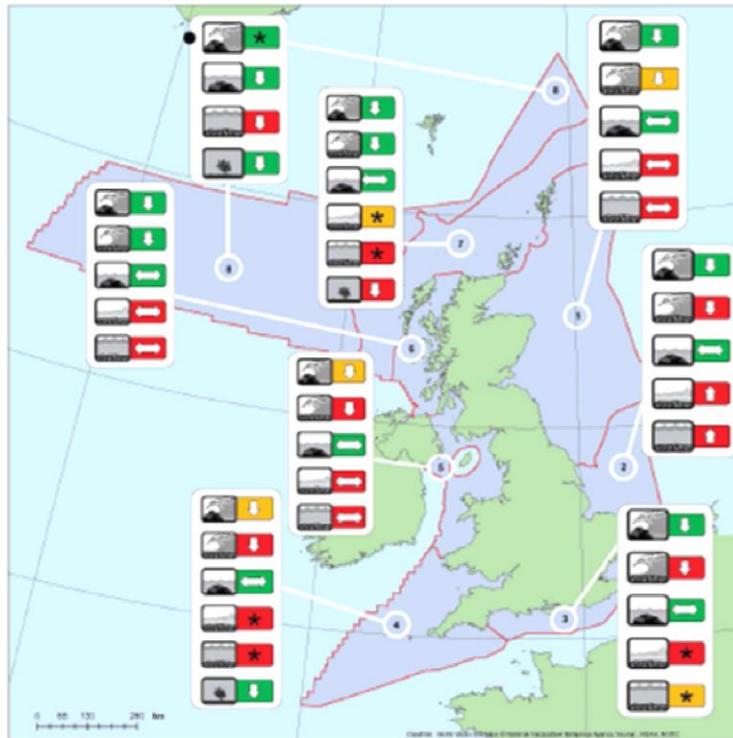
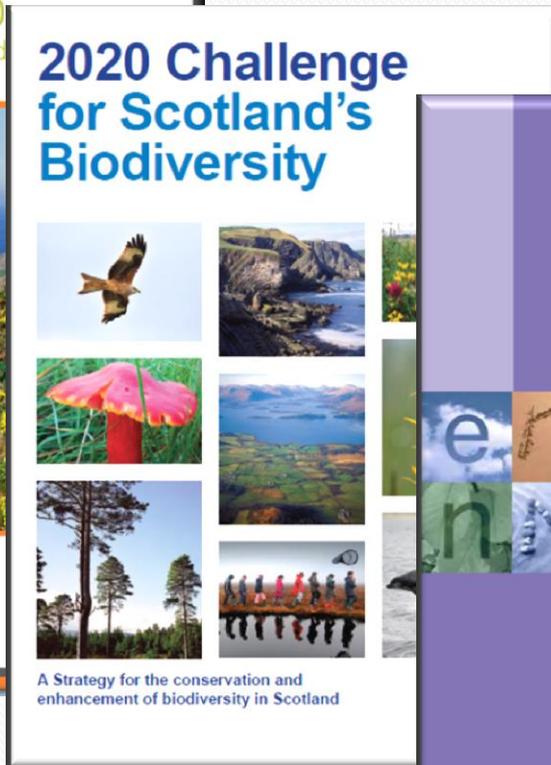
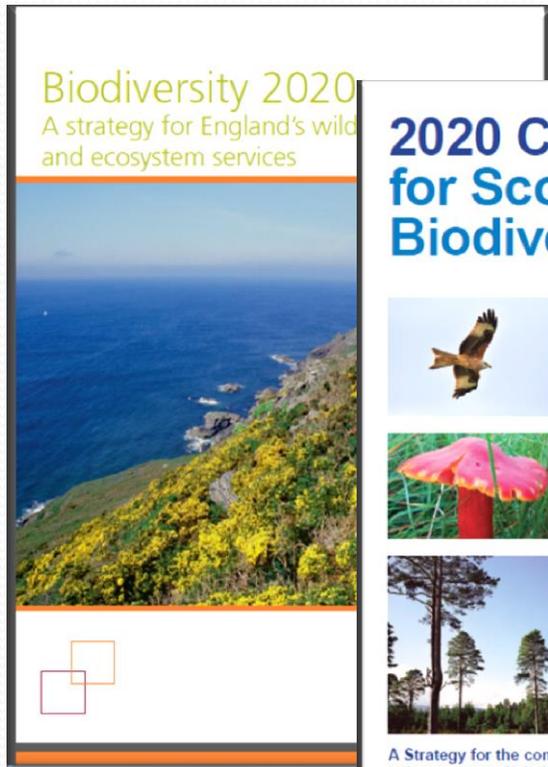


Figure 2.1 Healthy and biologically diverse seas – habitats.

Figure 2.2 Healthy and biologically diverse seas – species.

Regional Biodiversity Strategies



Northern Ireland

 **DOE**
Department of the Environment
www.doeni.gov.uk

Valuing Nature
Consultation on a Biodiversity Strategy for Northern Ireland to 2020



From Evidence to Opportunity

A Second Assessment of the State of Northern Ireland's Environment



2013

 **NIEA** Northern Ireland Environment Agency
www.doeni.gov.uk/niea

 An Agency within the Department of the Environment
www.doeni.gov.uk

Northern Ireland progress towards 2020 Aichi Targets since 2010

1. introduction of the WANE Act in 2011 which increased the range of species to be protected, increased penalties for wildlife crime including custodial sentences, banned hare coursing events and introduced a Biodiversity Duty on all public bodies;
2. marine legislation introduced to allow preparation of a Marine Plan and the designation of MCZs;
3. introduction of measures to control pollution and improve water quality;
4. greater volumes of waste being recycled;
5. implementation of agri-environment and other schemes for farm businesses;





Progress continued

6. the number of ASSIs designated increased to over 350;
7. completion of the designation of SACs and SPAs under the Habitats and Birds Directives;
8. appointment of Biodiversity Officers in the majority of district councils;
9. publication of a strategy to tackle the threat of IAS together with practical actions, many undertaken through an all-Ireland approach between NIEA and the NPWS;
10. publication of priority habitat and species list in 2010;
11. publication of habitat action plans and species action plans; and
12. the development of a greater level of knowledge and data in both terrestrial and marine environments

International and European context

- fully implement the Birds and Habitats Directives;
- maintain and restore ecosystems and their services;
- increase the contribution of agriculture and forestry to biodiversity;
- ensure the sustainable use of fisheries resources; and
- combat the introduction and spread of invasive species.



A Vision for Northern Ireland

“By 2050, our life support system, nature, is protected and restored for its own sake, its essential contribution to our well-being and prosperity, and to avert catastrophic changes likely to arise from its loss.”



Strategic Targets for Northern Ireland

Aichi Goal 1 – Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society			
	Target	Target Date	Lead Departments
1	Put in place a long-term agenda to take a broad view of the well-being and future of Northern Ireland's land	December 2016	DOE & partners
2	Finalise the Strategic Planning Policy Statement, taking account of the importance of biodiversity	December 2014	DOE
3	Introduce a marine plan based on an ecosystem approach to managing Northern Ireland's territorial waters	March 2015	DOE
4	Explore options to help lower emissions of ammonia and associated nitrogen to help meet UK emissions targets	March 2017	DOE & partners
5	Provide a report to the Northern Ireland Executive on progress with implementation of cross-departmental actions on mitigation and adaptation measures relating to climate change	Annually	DOE & partners
6	Publish a revised adaptation programme to implement actions to address climate change risks	December 2018	DOE & partners
Aichi Goal 2 – Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable development			
7	Review the Northern Ireland Sustainable Development Strategy and Implementation Plan to take account of and fully reflect statutory measures to promote biodiversity	March 2016	OFMDFM
8	Complete all site designation programmes so that at least 17% of terrestrial and 10% of marine areas are protected to establish ecologically coherent networks of marine	December 2020	DOE & partners

	protected areas and enhanced connectivity of terrestrial sites		
9	Implement management plans to achieve 95% of ASSIs in favourable condition	December 2020	DOE & partners
10	Restore 15% of key ecosystems that have been degraded with a particular emphasis on peatland, wetland, seabed and native woodland	December 2020	DOE & partners
11	Implement agri-environment schemes and other measures to help deliver improved sustainable environmental outcomes within the key targets of the 2014–2020 Rural Development Programme (Pillar II)	December 2020	DARD
12	Make 30% of direct payment (Pillar I) support to farmers and other landowners as a 'greening' payment in respect of requirements leading to crop diversification, retention of permanent grassland and the establishment of ecological focus as required by EU CAP in the years 2015–2019	December 2020	DARD
13	Encourage expansion of a wide range of forest types, largely through the transfer of land from agriculture to forestry, with support made available under the 2014–2020 rural development programme	December 2020	DARD & partners
14	Implement the Water Framework Directive to achieve good ecological status	December 2015	DOE DARD DRD
15	Develop a Water Strategy for Northern Ireland (2015–2021)	December 2015	DRD
16	Develop Social and Environmental Guidance for Water and Sewerage Services (2015–2021)	December 2015	DRD
17	Implement the Marine Strategy Framework Directive to achieve good environmental	December 2015	DOE DARD

	status		
18	Report on progress on the Invasive Species Strategy Implementation Plan	December 2016	DOE & partners
19	Develop and introduce new biosecurity measures, including legislation where required, to prevent the introduction of invasive species with a high impact on biodiversity	December 2016	DOE
20	Report on progress on implementation of the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan	Annually	DOE & partners
21	Implement the Common Fisheries Policy reforms in respect of sustainable exploitation rates, ending the practice of discarding unwanted fish species and the production of multi-annual plans to deliver the maximum sustainable yields and discard reduction targets	December 2020	DARD
Aichi Goal 3 – To improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity			
22	Develop an Implementation Plan for the Biodiversity Strategy	March 2015	DOE and partners
23	Review the Biodiversity Delivery Group mechanism to take account of the ecosystem approach and put in place a revised mechanism with a clearly defined role	December 2014	DOE
24	Implement pilot studies to test the potential for the application of an ecosystem approach	March 2016	DOE & partners
25	Review the method of prevention, monitoring and enforcement of all wildlife crime	December 2016	DOE
26	Review and publish the list of priority	December	DOE &

	species and habitats as required by the WANE Act	2017 and December 2020	partners
27	Consider the outcome of the Defra consultation on biodiversity offsetting and how this might be taken forward to meet Northern Ireland requirements	March 2015	DOE
28	Implement the Floods Directive, including production of flood risk maps	December 2015	DARD
Aichi Goal 4 – Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services			
29	Work with local authorities to assist in the conservation of priority habitats and species and to promote awareness of biodiversity and action at a local level	Annually	DOE & Local Authorities
30	Identify ways to increase public awareness of the value of Northern Ireland's nature and its services	Annually	DOE, NGOs and partners
31	Identify ways to harness greater support of business, eNGOs and the voluntary and community sector to benefit biodiversity	Annually	DOE, NGOs and partners
32	Determine the level of public participation in data gathering	Dec 2015	DOE, NGOs and partners
33	Increase the level of public participation in data gathering by at least 10% of the baseline figure	Dec 2017	DOE & partners
34	Identify ways to help increase sustainable public enjoyment and understanding of Northern Ireland's land and seascapes	December 2018	DOE & partners
Aichi Goal 5 – Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building			
35	Develop a framework for accounting for valuing natural capital	December 2016	DOE & partners

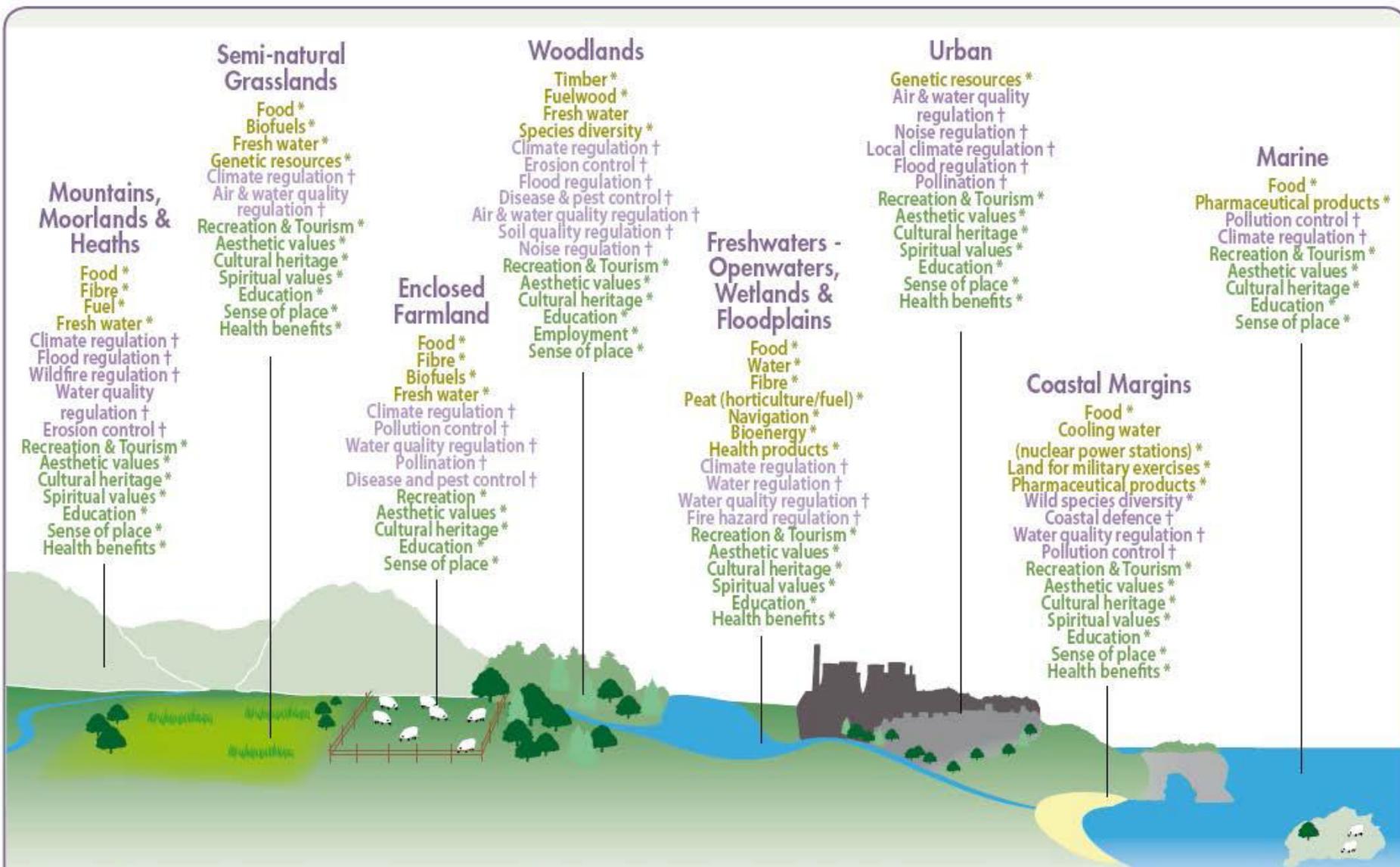


Figure 11 The eight Broad Habitats assessed in the UK NEA and examples of the goods and services derived from each. Items marked with an * denote goods, those with † denote services. Items in yellow are considered to be from provisioning services, purple from regulating and green from cultural. The supporting services, including amongst others primary production and nutrient cycling, are not listed against individual habitats as they are considered necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services. Source: adapted from the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA 2005).



Marine			
M1: Bathing Water Quality	Bathing water compliance for microbial standards of EC Bathing Water Directive (2002-2012)	↑	Green
M2: Blue Flag Beaches	Number of Blue Flag Awards – Beaches and Marinas (2002-2012)	No trend	Grey
M3: Marine Water Quality	Water Framework Directive overall status in transitional and coastal waters (% marine waterbody area) (2011 and 2012)	↑	Green
M4: Shellfish Waters	Compliance with more stringent guideline faecal coliform standard in shellfish waters (2011)	↔	Green
M5: Sea Temperature	Daily sea temperature, Irish Sea (April 1996-April 2012)	No trend	Grey

Biodiversity

BD1: Nature Conservation Designations – area	(a) Area of nature conservation designations (2000/01 – 2011/12) (b) Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI), designated as at March 2012 (c) Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites, designated as at March 2012	↑	
BD2: Nature Conservation Designations – condition	Condition of features within ASSIs for six year rolling period ending March 2012	↑	
BD3: Wild Birds	Wild bird populations in Northern Ireland (1994-2011)	No trend	
BD4: Wetland Birds	Wetland bird populations in Northern Ireland (1994/95 – 2010/11)	↓	
BD5: Priority Habitats	Trends in the status of Northern Ireland priority habitats (2000-2012)	↓	
BD6: Priority Species	Trend for Northern Ireland priority species (2000-2012)	↓	

Reporting on progress and review of mechanisms

The WANE Act requires the Department to report on progress in implementing the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy within five years of the legislation coming into operation and every five years thereafter.

The Department is keen to take a practical and flexible approach in achieving this. To avoid duplication, existing reporting mechanisms and other readily available information will be used to make informed decisions on the extent to which biodiversity loss has been halted. It is proposed to publish an interim report on progress in implementing the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy in 2017. A final report will be published in 2020 and will inform the development of a new ten-year strategy.

