

Lowland heathland

Full report outputted on the 30/07/2003 16:01:30

1. Status of the habitat / species

Please give your most accurate assessment of the status of your species or habitat for the UK and for each country. Leave the row blank where the species or habitat does not occur in that country.

	Amount:	Units:	Year:	Accuracy:	Reference for data:
UK	58000	<input type="text"/>	1995	Informed guess	UK BAP, Heathland inventory. Farrell, L (1993) Low land Heathland: the extent of habitat change. English Nature Science No. 12.
E	41000	<input type="text"/>	2001	Informed guess	English Nature Site Information System (ENSIS) report April 2001.
NI	5400	<input type="text"/>	1992	Partial or sample survey	Northern Ireland Countryside Survey 1992

S	18888		1993	Informed guess	English Nature Science Report No. 12: Low land heathland: the extent of habitat change (Farrell, 1993)
	W	13385	2002	Full survey	Phase I survey (incl. dry acid heath, dry basic heath, basic dry heath/calcareous grassland mosaic, dune heath, coastal grassland/heath mosaic, coastal heathland, w et heath/acid grassland mosaic, w et heath)

Information originally entered by Isabel Alonso on Friday, August 23, 2002
Information last changed by Isabel Alonso on Friday, December 20, 2002

2. Trend in Biological Status

Please give your best estimate of the current trend for your species or habitat for the UK, and each appropriate country, using the following categories. Please give an estimate unless there is absolutely no information on which to assess status.

Trend:	Accuracy:	Reference for data:
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UK	Increasing	Informed guess	THH project officers, Country Agencies specialists
E	Increasing	Informed guess	THH projects and other projects (e.g. Wildlife Trusts)
NI	Declining (slow ing)	Best guess	Environment & Heritage Service, NI
S	Stable	Informed guess	SNH (L. Farrell pers. comm.)
W	Stable	Informed guess	CCW (J. Sherry pers. comm.)

Information originally entered by Isabel Alonso on Monday, September 02, 2002
 Information last changed by Isabel Alonso on Friday, December 20, 2002

3. Status of knowledge

To what extent is our scientific knowledge of the habitat / species (e.g research information, autecological knowledge, knowledge for effective re-introduction or habitat restoration/re-creation) sufficient to deliver the plan targets?

Please give an assessment for the UK overall but if there is significant difference in knowledge between different countries this should be noted.

Status of knowledge:

Knowledge sufficient to make some impact, but more research needed.

Notes:

No surveys have been carried out UK-wide. Phase II surveys have been carried out covering app. 800 ha of low land heathland in Wales. Further research needed in the following areas: atmospheric pollution, grazing impacts and climate change.

NOTE TO Q. 1. STATUS: Although the extent of low land heathland seems to have increased since the HAP was published this is mainly due to better maps and data systems.

NOTE TO Q. 2 TRENDS: Some small losses have taken place but the HAP Steering Group believes that the re-creation efforts in some counties exceed these losses, e.g. Hants (New Forest) and Norfolk/Suffolk (Thetford). Losses due to inadequate/lack of habitat management have continued, although restoration work has arrested scrub encroachment in some counties and it is now beginning to reverse it through THH.

NOTE TO Q4. PROGRESS ON TARGETS. The targets figures come from different sources and were obtained using different definitions of heathland. E.g. England heathland restoration target comes from ENSIS and refers only to SSSIs, whereas the progress also includes non-designated sites. Thus the apparent mismatch.

NOTE TO Q.5. The main factors affecting the loss of heathland in NI are different to the rest of the UK: overgrazing is the most important issue and agricultural reclamation (in cases using agri-environment funding!) the second most important.

Information originally entered by Isabel Alonso on Monday, September 02, 2002

Information last changed by Isabel Alonso on Friday, December 20, 2002

4. Progress on targets

Each of the revised targets from the 2001 Targets Review is listed below.

For each one please give a qualitative assessment of progress for the UK and each country. You can also enter quantitative information on progress by entering data in each of the target boxes and entering the current amount in the amount box. For more information see Help.

T3: Encourage the re-establishment by 2005 of a further 6,000 ha of heathland with the emphasis on the counties of Hampshire, Cornwall, Dorset, Surrey, Devon, Staffordshire, Suffolk and Norfolk in England and Pembrokeshire, Glamorgan and west Gwynedd in Wales, particularly where this links separate heathland areas.

Target start date:	<input type="text" value="1995"/>
Target end date:	<input type="text" value="2005"/>
Target units:	<input type="text"/>

	Progress	Target	Current	Accuracy	Monitoring
UK	<input type="text" value="Some progress (behind schedule)"/>	<input type="text" value="6000"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Informed guess"/>	<input type="text" value="No"/>
E	<input type="text" value="Some progress (behind schedule)"/>	<input type="text" value="5400"/>	<input type="text" value="2000"/>	<input type="text" value="Informed guess"/>	<input type="text" value="No"/>
NI	<input type="text" value="Not applicable"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="No"/>
S	<input type="text" value="No progress"/>	<input type="text" value="124"/>	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input type="text" value="Informed guess"/>	<input type="text" value="No"/>

W	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	600	2	Informed guess ▼	No ▼
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T1: Maintain the extent of all existing lowland heathland (58,000 ha).

Target start date:	1995
Target end date:	2005
Target units:	▼

	Progress	Target	Current	Accuracy	Monitoring
UK	Target exceeded (survey success) ▼	58000	73273	Informed guess ▼	No ▼
E	Target exceeded (survey success) ▼	32000	41000	Partial or sample survey ▼	Under active development ▼
NI	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	5400		Informed guess ▼	Under active development ▼
S	Target achieved ▼	18888	18888	Informed guess ▼	No ▼
W	Target exceeded (survey success) ▼	7452	13385	Full survey ▼	No ▼

T2: Improve by management all existing lowland heathland currently in unfavourable condition.

Target start date:	1995
Target end date:	2005
Target units:	<input type="text"/>

	Progress	Target	Current	Accuracy	Monitoring
UK	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	20669			No ▼
E	Some progress (on schedule) ▼	10805	12159	Informed guess ▼	No ▼
NI	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	5400		Unknown ▼	Under active development ▼
S	No progress ▼	3364	0	Informed guess ▼	No ▼
W	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	6500	1326	Best guess ▼	No ▼

Information originally entered by Isabel Alonso on Tuesday, October 15, 2002
 Information last changed by Isabel Alonso on Friday, December 20, 2002

5. Current factors affecting the habitat

When your plan was published the factors (threats) that were thought to be causing loss or decline were listed (in section 2). Re-assessing the current situation may help prioritise actions for your species or habitat. In addition, this enables identification of the main threats to biodiversity across all plans. It is useful to assess whether the importance of different factors is changing and whether there are new issues emerging.

The threat section from the original plan is duplicated below, and a first attempt at categorising the threats has been made. Please confirm that you agree with the categorisation of the original threats identified in the plan (by deleting any wrongly categorised threats and adding the correct category). Please also add to the list any significant threats that have emerged recently, being mindful of environmental issues that have increased in profile or been recognised since plan publication (e.g. climate change). Once you are happy that the list contains all the threats identified in the published plan together with any new ones, please rank them in order of severity (1= highest threat). If the situation has changed and one of the published threats is no longer significant, please leave this in the list but give this rank = 0.

Current factors affecting the habitat from the original publication:

2.1 In the past heathland was lost primarily to agriculture, forestry, mineral extraction and development. Uncontrolled burning has also been a particular threat to bryophyte and lichen-rich heathland. The main factors affecting the habitat at present are: Encroachment of trees and scrub and the simplification of vegetation structure due to a lack of conservation management such as light grazing, controlled burning and cutting. Nutrient enrichment, particularly deposition of nitrogen compounds emitted from intensive livestock farming, or from other sources. Fragmentation and disturbance from developments such as housing and road constructions. Agricultural improvement including reclamation and overgrazing, especially in Northern Ireland.

Keyworded factors:

To add factors click the add button, to delete factors check the delete box and then click the delete button.

Delete:	Rank:	Keyword:
<input type="checkbox"/>	10	Habitat loss / degradation - agriculture Conversion to arable
<input type="checkbox"/>	10	Habitat loss / degradation - extraction/drainage Aggregate extraction - land
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Habitat loss / degradation - infrastructure development Housing infrastructure

<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Habitat loss / degradation - infrastructure development Transport infrastructure
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Habitat loss / degradation - management practice Inappropriate heathland management
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Habitat loss / degradation - management practice Scrub encroachment
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Habitat loss / degradation Invasive alien species (directly impacting habitat)
<input type="checkbox"/>	8	Human disturbance Other recreation / tourism
<input type="checkbox"/>	12	Pollution - atmospheric Global warming / sea-level rise
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Pollution - atmospheric Nitrogen deposition
<input type="checkbox"/>	9	Pollution - land Agricultural (nutrient enrichment)
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Pollution - land Diffuse solid waste

Information originally entered by Isabel Alonso on Monday, September 02, 2002
Information last changed by Isabel Alonso on Wednesday, December 11, 2002

6. Constraints (optional)

Select the three most significant constraints to achieving the targets of the plan, and indicate the order of priority (1-3 with 1 being the most significant constraint). Only include constraints that are acting as a real blockage to delivering the plan targets or leading to a substantial delay in their delivery. For each constraint, please indicate whether you feel that it is within the ability of the lead partner or steering group to resolve the constraint.

Constraint 1:

Constraint keyword:

Species and habitat management | Habitat quality declining (including due to poor management)

Country:

UK E NI S
 W

Solution:

Bring more areas under appropriate management. Post THH a sustainable source of funding ongoing heathland management needs to be identified and secured. Agri-environment payments, which are currently funding the management in almost a third of all heathlands in England (CS uptake for 2001, Defra), will form part of the solution. The Steering Group will continue to press for an adjustment to payment rates, which must cover the true cost of management practices. FE, which manage about 40% of heaths, face severe difficulties over future funding which endanger progress of the HAP.

Solution type:

Funding and incentive schemes

Able to resolve:

Constraint 2:

Constraint keyword:

Species and habitat management | Habitat fragmentation increasing or too great

Country:

UK E NI S
 W

Solution:

Solution type:

Find ways to link isolated blocks of heathland. Strategic and proactive approach required to identify large-scale re-creation opportunities, agreed by the main conservation agencies and organisations, coupled with an appropriate funding strategy.

Legislation and policies

Able to resolve:

Constraint 3:

Constraint keyword:

Country:

Research, survey and information | Baseline survey - required

- UK E NI S
- W

Solution:

Solution type:

Develop baselines covering extent, condition and progress achieved against BAP targets. Maintain in an accessible electronic format.

Survey / monitoring

Able to resolve:

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7. Steering Group

Please list all organisations that are represented on the steering group for your species/habitat (include all organisations that have contributed either directly or by correspondence within the last 3 years). Where a steering group does not exist please leave this form blank.

To add organisations click the add button, to delete organisations check the delete box and then click the delete button.

Delete:	Organisation:
<input type="checkbox"/>	British Entomological and Natural History Society
<input type="checkbox"/>	Country Landowners and Business Association
<input type="checkbox"/>	Countryside Agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	Countryside Council for Wales
<input type="checkbox"/>	Defence Estates
<input type="checkbox"/>	Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
<input type="checkbox"/>	English Nature
<input type="checkbox"/>	Environment Agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	Environment and Heritage Service

- Forest Enterprise
- Forestry Authority
- Forestry Commission
- Herpetological Conservation Trust
- Joint Nature Conservation Committee
- National Trust
- Plantlife
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
- Scottish Natural Heritage
- Surrey County Council
- Wildlife Trust

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Information last changed by Isabel Alonso on Friday, December 20, 2002

8. Other Groups/Organisations

Please list any additional groups/organisations that are actively involved in implementing your action plan. (This is to try to assess which groups are involved where there is no steering group and any additional contributors). If you do not have any other organisations involved, click here.

To add organisations click the add button, to delete organisations check the delete box and then click the delete button.

Delete:	Organisation:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group
<input type="checkbox"/>	Scottish Wildlife Trust

Information originally entered by Isabel Alonso on Thursday, December 12, 2002
Information last changed by Isabel Alonso on Monday, December 16, 2002

9. Linkages to LBAPs

a) Which of the following most accurately describes your interaction with LBAPs, up to now?

b) If you have been in contact with LBAPs how was it initiated?

c) Irrespective of current contact, how important do you consider LBAP co-ordinated action will be in achieving the targets of the plan? Select from category:

Important

d) If you consider LBAP action to be anything other than unimportant, which of the following forms of engagement do you think would be appropriate? (Note, you may tick more than one category.)

- Indirect contact (e.g. posting information on UKBAP website, sharing work programmes, meeting schedules, articles in Biodiversity News, newsletter)
- Provision of generic information on habitat and/or species (e.g. advice and guidance on habitat/species ecology and management)
- Direct provision of advice (e.g. proactive approach to LBAP, response to consultations from LBAPs, advice on LBAP target setting)
- Reciprocal attendance at meetings
- Development of collaborative projects

Other (please specify):

LBAPs have a potential role in advocating heathland conservation policy to Local Planning Authorities.

Information originally entered by Isabel Alonso on Tuesday, October 15, 2002
Information last changed by Isabel Alonso on Wednesday, December 11, 2002

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10. Successes (optional)

Have there been key successes in the implementation of your plan that should be drawn to the attention of government, the wider BAP partnership, or the public? Please give a brief description (i.e. 2-3 sentences) of up to three successes and allocate a topic area to each of them:

Success 1:

Description:

The Steering Group has influenced the progress of externally funded partnership projects (including 25 Tomorrow 's Heathland Heritage projects; LIFE projects (Dorset, New Forest)).

Country:

UK E NI S W

Keyword:

Funding and incentives | Heritage Lottery Funding secured

Success 2:

Description:

Site safeguard through development control. Steering Group member organisations have been involved in defending low land heathland from the pressures, both direct and indirect, of development.

Country:

UK E NI S W

Keyword:

Policy, legislation and designation | Other

Success 3:

Description:

Development of Common Standards for Monitoring Low land Heathland

Country:

UK E NI S W

Keyword:

Research, survey and information | Monitoring surveys under way

Information originally entered by Isabel Alonso on Monday, September 02, 2002
Information last changed by Isabel Alonso on Tuesday, December 17, 2002

Thankyou for answering the questions. You have not yet completed all of the questions. You can go back and answer the additional ones or edit the ones you have already answered whenever you want.

Sign-off:

When you have completed all of the questions that you are able to, you must sign off your reporting.

I agree that the steering group (if present) have agreed the information in this report and that the following contact point has also signed it off:

Contact point:

Isabel Alonso

email:

isabel.alonso@

Your name:

Isabel Alonso

Date:

19 December
