

# Upland heathland

Full report outputted on the 30/07/2003 16:02:28

## 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	2109400	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	Total of country amounts
E	270000	<input type="text"/>	1999	Partial or sample survey	Upland Heathland HAP: Bardgett R D, Marsden J H & Howard D C. 1995. Biological Conservation, 71.
NI	60300	<input type="text"/>	2000	Partial or sample survey	Northern Ireland Countryside Survey 2000
S	170000	<input type="text"/>	1999	Informed guess	Upland Heathland HAP - This is considered to be an overestimate as it includes mosaics of other habitat types eg blanket bog. More accurate data is under active assessment.

W	79100		1999	Partial or sample survey	Upland Heathland HAP: NCC/CCW Phase 1 level habitat survey

Information originally entered by Mick Rebane on Wednesday, December 18, 2002  
 Information last changed by JNCC on 11 March 2003

## 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:
UK	Declining (slow ing)	Informed guess	
E	Declining (slow ing)	Partial or sample survey	English Nature. 2001. State of Nature: The Upland Challenge
NI	Declining (slow ing)	Informed guess	

<b>S</b>	Declining (slow ing) ▼	Informed guess ▼	Mackey E C et al. 2001. Natural Heritage Trends Scotland 2001.SNH Battleby.
	Declining (slow ing) ▼	Informed guess ▼	Various Phase II reports/anecdotal

Information originally entered by Mick Rebane on Wednesday, December 18, 2002  
 Information last changed by Mick Rebane on Friday, January 10, 2003

---

### 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:**

Know ledge of extent varies between countries. Upland habitat inventory in progress in England to address this shortfall. All agencies developing common standards for condition assessment of this habitat.  
More research on a larger scale than hitherto. Work using cattle, sheep and combinations of both at different levels and seasonally adjusted to achieve restoration combined with direct intervention methods underway.  
Research on environmentally sustainable burning and impact of burning on heathland also required.  
Further research on heathland restoration and compilation of best practice underway in England.

Information originally entered by Mick Rebane on Wednesday, December 18, 2002  
Information last changed by Mick Rebane on Friday, January 10, 2003

---

## 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.

**T1: Maintain the current extent and overall distribution of the upland heathland which is currently in favourable condition.**

Target start date:

1999

Target end date:

ongoing

Target units:

Progress

Target

Current

Accuracy

Monitoring

UK

Some progress (behind schedule)

Under active development

E

Some progress (behind schedule)

50120

Partial or sample survey

Under active development

NI

Some progress (behind schedule)

Unknown

Under active development

S

Some progress (behind schedule)

Under consideration

W

Some progress (on schedule)

Under active development

**T2: Achieve favourable condition on all upland heathland SSSIs/ASSIs by 2010.**

Target start date:

1999

Target end date:

2010

Target units:

	Progress	Target	Current	Accuracy	Monitoring
<b>UK</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼				Under active development ▼
<b>E</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	179000	50120	Partial or sample survey ▼	Under active development ▼
<b>NI</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	8000		Best guess ▼	Under active development ▼
<b>S</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼				Under active development ▼
<b>W</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	34300			Under active development ▼

**T3: Achieve demonstrable improvements in the condition of at least 50% of semi- natural upland heath outside SSSI/ASSIs by 2010 (compared with their condition in 2000).**

Target start date:

1999

Target end date:

2010

Target units:

**Progress**

**Target**

**Current**

**Accuracy**

**Monitoring**

<b>UK</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼				
<b>E</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	45000		Best guess ▼	Under active development ▼
<b>NI</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	2000		Unknown ▼	Under active development ▼
<b>S</b>	No progress ▼				Under consideration ▼
<b>W</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	22350			Under active development ▼

**T4: Seek to increase dwarf shrubs to at least 25% cover where they have been reduced or eliminated due to inappropriate management. A target for such restoration of between 50,000 and 100,000 ha by 2010 is proposed.**

Target start date:

Target end date:

Target units:

	Progress	Target	Current	Accuracy	Monitoring
<b>UK</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	10000			Under active development ▼
<b>E</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	30000	10062	Partial or sample survey ▼	Under active development ▼

<b>NI</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	2000		Informed guess ▼	
<b>S</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼				Under consideration ▼
<b>W</b>	Some progress (on schedule) ▼	3700			Under active development ▼

**T5: Initiate management to re-create 5,000 ha of upland heath by 2005 where heathland has been lost due to agricultural improvement or afforestation, with a particular emphasis on reducing fragmentation of existing heathland.**

<b>Target start date:</b>	1999
<b>Target end date:</b>	2005
<b>Target units:</b>	

	<b>Progress</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Accuracy</b>	<b>Monitoring</b>
<b>UK</b>	Unknown ▼	5000			
<b>E</b>	Some progress (behind schedule) ▼	2500	379	Partial or sample survey ▼	Under active development ▼
<b>NI</b>	No progress ▼	100			
<b>S</b>	Unknown ▼				Under consideration ▼

<b>W</b>	Some progress (on schedule) ▼	200			▼	Under active development ▼
----------	-------------------------------	-----	--	--	---	----------------------------

Information originally entered by Mick Rebane on Wednesday, December 18, 2002  
Information last changed by JNCC on 03 April 2003

---

## 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 Although upland heathland is dependent on management of grazing and burning to prevent succession to scrub or woodland, many upland heaths suffer from overgrazing and environmentally damaging burning regimes. Some of the problems caused by these management practices are described below. As well as direct loss of habitat, many areas of upland heathland are characterised by limited structural diversity with few natural transitions from open heath into scrub and woodland. Current management and other factors are continuing to prevent development of these features in most areas. Undergrazing occurs but is generally only of local significance.
- 2.2 Agriculture is the dominant land use in the uplands. Most of the upland heathland resource falls within the Less Favoured Areas (LFAs). Livestock subsidies have led to a substantial increase in stocking rates (especially of sheep) in many upland areas. For example, the number of ewes in the Severely Disadvantaged Area of England increased by 40% between 1976 and 1993. Within the LFA boundary, financial assistance is available to farmers which is additional to the market support and structural incentives of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Livestock quotas were introduced in 1993 to control the amount of meat production and the overall cost to the CAP, and environmental conditions are now also attached to all the main

livestock subsidy schemes, although overgrazing is still a problem and losses of upland heathland habitat continue.

- 2.2.1 High stocking levels of sheep, and to a lesser extent cattle, lead to heavy grazing of heather and other dwarf shrubs. High numbers of red deer *Cervus elaphus* are a problem in parts of the Scottish Highlands. Inappropriate methods of supplementary feeding and the absence or minimal use of shepherding also contribute to the problem of overgrazing.
- 2.2.2 Heavy grazing by sheep, cattle or deer can prevent regeneration by native woodland and scrub, notably along upland heathland margins and streamsides where such habitat additions would be likely to enhance biodiversity value.
- 2.2.3 Difficulties in negotiating agreements with commoners are hampering take-up of agri-environment schemes on common land.
- 2.2.4 Conversion to grassland occurs through ploughing, reseeding, liming and fertilisation for agricultural purposes, particularly at lower elevations. Drainage and moorland 'gripping' also reduce the interest of wet heath. These factors have become less significant over the past ten years.
- 2.3 Afforestation (mainly by non-native conifers) leads to direct loss of dwarf-shrub habitat, although temporary and permanent areas of heathland are now being created within some existing forests by restructuring after the first rotation.
- 2.4 Poorly managed muirburn (ie large-scale and too frequent in operation) reduces the habitat quality of upland heath by causing a simplification of structure, loss of lower plant assemblages and erosion of peat.
- 2.5 Encroachment by bracken can lead to a loss of biodiversity; this is a significant problem in some upland areas.
- 2.6 Quarries, windfarms, communication masts, access tracks and certain other planning developments can impact directly on wildlife interest.
- 2.7 Acidification, tropospheric ozone and nitrogen enrichment caused by atmospheric deposition can lead to vegetation changes including a reduction in the lichen and bryophyte interest. Nitrogen deposition can increase the likelihood of insect defoliation of upland heathland.
- 2.8 Climate change could potentially lead to changes in vegetation composition and structure, although any increase in temperature may also be accompanied by possible increases in rainfall and wind speeds. The future position is still unclear but one of the dominant heathland species, heather, does have a relatively wide tolerance of temperature and rainfall, providing the overall climate remains oceanic. It is likely that within the time span of this plan other factors, notably high stocking levels, will have by far the greatest impact on upland heathland vegetation and species.
- 2.9 Localised damage and threats from other forms of land use in the uplands, such as military use and recreation, are a concern.

2.1 The interaction of two or more of the factors listed above often greatly increases the overall impact on upland heathland vegetation. For example, poorly managed burning followed by heavy grazing will result in the loss of dwarf shrubs more rapidly than would either factor in isolation. It is possible that grazing pressures interact with pollution to influence vegetation change.

## 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"/>	2	Habitat loss / degradation - agriculture   Inappropriate grazing (due to timing or livestock type)
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Habitat loss / degradation - agriculture   Overgrazing
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Habitat loss / degradation - agriculture   Ploughing
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Habitat loss / degradation - agriculture   Tramping by livestock
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Habitat loss / degradation - extraction/drainage   Aggregate extraction - land
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Habitat loss / degradation - extraction/drainage   Drainage (for agriculture)
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Habitat loss / degradation - infrastructure development   Telecommunications infrastructure
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Habitat loss / degradation - management practice   Demise of traditional practices
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Habitat loss / degradation - management practice   Fires

- ✓  1 Habitat loss / degradation - management practice | Inappropriate moorland management
- ✓  2 Habitat loss / degradation - woodlands/forestry | Tree / wood planting
- ✓  4 Human disturbance | Military use / disturbance
- ✓  4 Invasive/non-native species (directly affecting species) | Disease (pathogens / parasites)
- ✓  2 Pollution - atmospheric | Acid precipitation
- ✓  3 Pollution - atmospheric | Global warming / sea-level rise
- ✓  2 Pollution - atmospheric | Nitrogen deposition
- ✓  3 Pollution - land | Agricultural (nutrient enrichment)

Information originally entered by Mick Rebane on Wednesday, December 18, 2002  
Information last changed by Mick Rebane on Friday, January 10, 2003

---

## 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:**

Policy, legislation and designation | Agriculture (incl. Common Agricultural Policy)

**Country:**

UK E NI S W

**Solution:**

Livestock subsidies have led to a substantial increase in stocking rates (especially of sheep) in many upland areas. Pillar 1 production subsidies need to be replaced and diverted into Pillar 2 payments delivering public goods in form of environmental gains. Some progress made by decoupling the UK LFA payment.

**Solution type:**

Legislation and policies

**Able to resolve:****Constraint 2:****Constraint keyword:**

Policy, legislation and designation | Agriculture (incl. Common Agricultural Policy)

**Country:**

UK E NI S W

**Solution:**

A range of policy changes to tackle issues of severe overgrazing of common land in England and Wales, overgrazing by deer in Scotland, a review of overgrazing rules attached to livestock subsidies to make them more effective, a review of the Heather and Grass Burning Code in England to promote best practice. A review of the muirburn code and guidance has recently been completed in Scotland.

**Solution type:**

Legislation and policies

<b>Able to resolve:</b>	✓
<b>Constraint 3:</b>	
<b>Constraint keyword:</b>	<b>Country:</b>
Species and habitat management   Grazing regime - causing problems	UK E NI S W
<b>Solution:</b>	<b>Solution type:</b>
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>To encourage extensive, low intensity grazing management and to bring deer into the equation. Specific measures to bring more common land into agri-environment schemes.</p> </div>	Funding and incentive schemes
<b>Able to resolve:</b>	✓

Information originally entered by Mick Rebane on Wednesday, December 18, 2002  
Information last changed by Mick Rebane on Friday, January 10, 2003

## 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:**

- ✓ Countryside Council for Wales
- ✓ Deer Commission for Scotland
- ✓ English Nature
- ✓ Environment and Heritage Service
- ✓ Forestry Commission
- ✓ Game Conservancy
- ✓ Joint Nature Conservation Committee
- ✓ National Assembly for Wales
- ✓ National Farmers Union
- ✓ National Parks Authorities
- ✓ National Trust
- ✓ Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
- ✓ Rural Development Service
- ✓ Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Division
- ✓ Scottish Landowners Federation

Scottish Natural Heritage

Information originally entered by Mick Rebane on Wednesday, December 18, 2002  
Information last changed by Mick Rebane on Friday, January 10, 2003

---

## 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.

---

## 9. Linkages to LBAPs

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

Little or no contact with LBAPs.

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):**

Information originally entered by Mick Rebane on Wednesday, December 18, 2002

---

>

## 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:**

<b>Description:</b>	<b>Country:</b>
---------------------	-----------------

Extensive coverage and protection of upland heathland habitat within Natura 2000 series of sites. Additional candidate SACs proposed from UK.

UK E NI S W

**Keyword:**

Policy, legislation and designation | Improved protection through site designation - international (SPA, SAC, RAMSAR)

**Success 2:**

**Description:**

Inclusion of upland heath/moorland within agri-environment schemes with over 130,000ha (England) and 208,000ha (Scotland) . Over 71,000 ewes removed in Scotland under this option.

**Country:**

UK E NI S W

**Keyword:**

Funding and incentives | Agricultural schemes - delivering wildlife gains

**Success 3:**

**Description:**

**Country:**

A wide variety of restoration projects throughout the UK, including site specific work and the planned production of a best practice guide for restoration of upland habitats in England. Also major research projects on restoration grazing.

UK E NI S W

**Keyword:**

Research, survey and information | Habitat creation/restoration techniques improved

Information originally entered by Mick Rebane on Wednesday, December 18, 2002  
Information last changed by Mick Rebane on Friday, January 10, 2003

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:** Mick Rebane **email:** michael.reban

**Your name:** Mick Rebane

**Date:** 10/01/03