

Developing a biodiversity metric for Scotland's planning system

For the Improvement Service – 5 December 2024

Scottish Biodiversity Metric Team, NatureScot



NatureScot
NàdarAlba

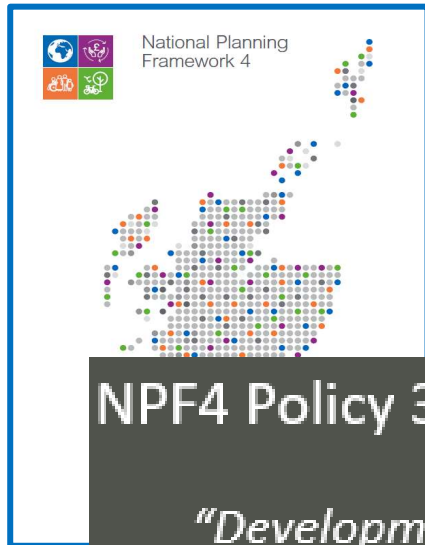
Scotland's Nature Agency
Buidheann Nàdair na h-Alba

- Background on the project, and its broad scope.
 - Differences between the English and Scottish approaches.
 - How the English metric works.
 - What tasks are involved for the project.
 - Where we have reached, and where we are going.
-
- What type of preparations would help a Scottish biodiversity metric work well for planning authorities?
 - In the interim, can things be done to help planning authorities better considering biodiversity enhancement?



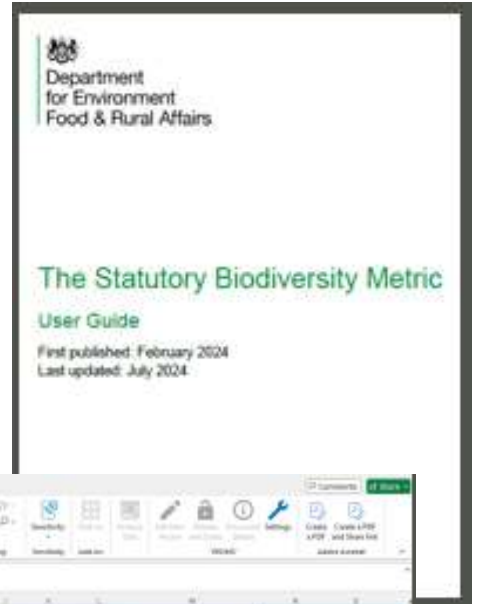
A biodiversity metric for the Scottish planning system

Headline messages



NPF4 Policy 3(b):

"Development proposals for national or major development, or for development that requires an Environmental Impact Assessment will only be supported where ...significant biodiversity enhancements are provided, in addition to any proposed mitigation."

A screenshot of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric software interface. The interface includes a menu bar at the top with options like "File", "Edit", "View", "Tools", and "Help". Below the menu bar is a toolbar with various icons. The main area displays a "Project Name" field, a "Map Reference" field, and a "Project Details" table. The table has columns for "Project Name", "Map Reference", "Project Type", "Project Status", "Project Location", "Project Date", "Project Description", "Project Impact", "Project Mitigation", and "Project Significance". The table is currently empty, with only the headers visible. The bottom of the screen shows a status bar with the text "All On Site Habitat Baseline" and "4.3 On Site Habitat Enhancement".



National Planning Framework 4



Policy 3

- a) Development proposals will contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity, including where relevant, restoring degraded habitats and building and strengthening nature networks and the connections between them. Proposals should also integrate nature-based solutions, where possible.
- b) Development proposals for national or major development, or for development that requires an Environmental Impact Assessment will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity, including nature networks so they are in a demonstrably better state than without intervention. This will include future management. To inform this, **best practice assessment** methods should be used. Proposals within these categories will demonstrate how they have met all of the following criteria:

Biodiversity

Policy Principles

Policy Intent:

To protect biodiversity, reverse biodiversity loss, deliver positive effects from development and strengthen nature networks.

Policy Outcomes:

- Biodiversity is enhanced and better connected including through strengthened nature networks and nature-based solutions.

Local Development

LDPs should protect and enhance biodiversity hierarchy. They should recovery and nature development plan a the creation of nature connections between ecological connectivity habitats or creating incorporating measures including population

Policy 3

- a) Development proposals for enhancement of relevant, restoring building and strengthening nature networks and the connections between them should also integrate nature-based solutions where possible.

- b) Development proposals for national or major development, or for development that requires an Environmental Impact Assessment will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity, including nature networks so they are in a demonstrably better state than without intervention. This will include future management. To inform this, **best practice assessment** methods should be used. Proposals within these categories will demonstrate how they have met all of the following criteria:

- i. the proposal is based on an understanding of the existing characteristics of the site and its local, regional and national ecological context prior to development, including the presence of any irreplaceable habitats;
- ii. wherever feasible, nature-based solutions have been integrated and made best use of;
- iii. an assessment of potential negative effects which should be fully mitigated in line with the mitigation hierarchy prior to identifying enhancements;
- iv. significant biodiversity enhancements are provided, in addition to any proposed mitigation. This should include nature-based solutions

- have been integrated and made best use of;
- iii. an assessment of potential negative effects which should be fully mitigated in line with the mitigation hierarchy prior to identifying enhancements;
- iv. **significant biodiversity enhancements** are provided, in addition to any proposed mitigation. This should include nature networks, linking to and strengthening habitat connectivity within and beyond the development, secured within a reasonable timescale and with reasonable certainty. Management arrangements for their long-term retention and monitoring should be included, wherever appropriate; and
- v. local community benefits of the biodiversity and/or nature networks have been considered.

To slightly paraphrase:

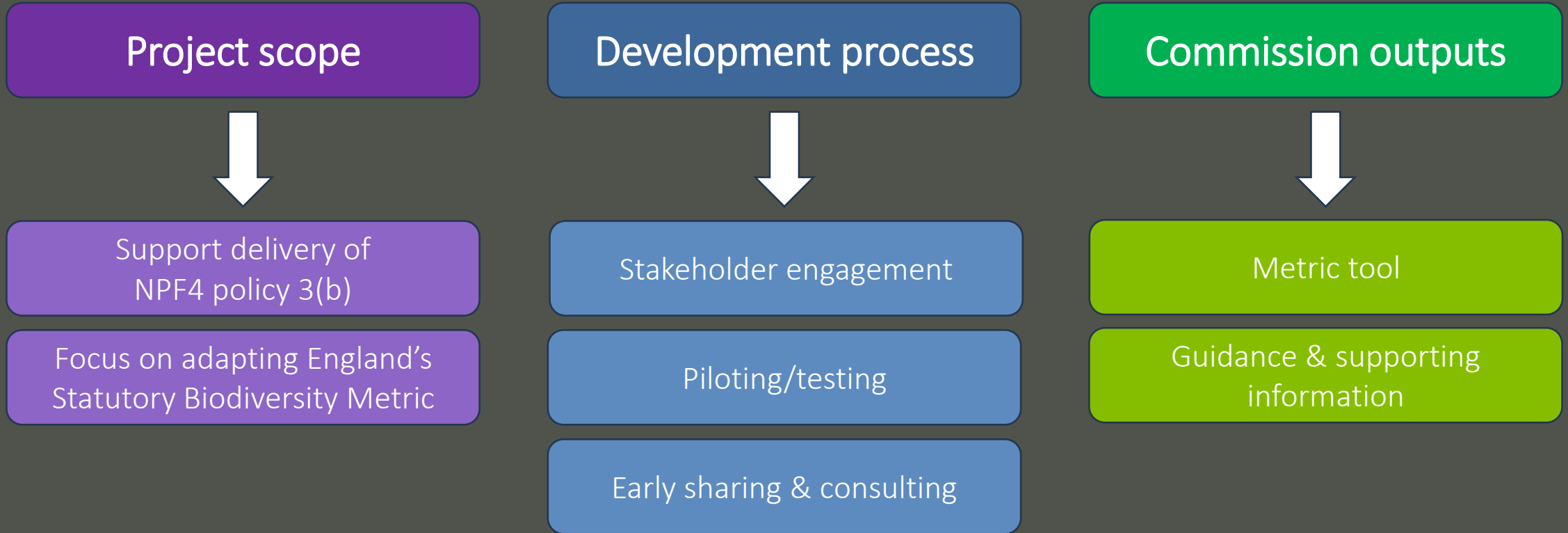
With refinement, England's Statutory Biodiversity Metric could be adapted for planning and development use in Scotland

(McVittie et al., 2023)

Research into Approaches to Measuring Biodiversity in Scotland

September 2023

Scottish Biodiversity Metric





A Biodiversity Metric for Scotland's Planning System



Information hub



Publications and documents

You can download a copy of this document, here:



Latest metric updates

September 2024:

- Our consultation on the key issues to be addressed when developing a Scottish biodiversity metric closed on the 10th May 2024. [A summary of the key issues](#) identified through the consultation is now available.
- A roundtable discussion on the development of a Scottish biodiversity metric was held on 01 May 2024. An overview of the comments and topics discussed can be read in the [meeting summary note](#).

Contents

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 - 1.1 [Background](#)

'Biodiversity net gain' in England

Guidance

Biodiversity net gain

Planning practice guidance on biodiversity net gain

Biodiversity
net gain
impacts

About biodiversity gain

What is the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain?

Biodiversity net gain is a way of creating and improving biodiversity by requiring development to have a positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity.

In England, biodiversity net gain is required under a statutory framework introduced by [Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 \(inserted by the Environment Act 2021\)](#). This statutory framework is referred to as 'biodiversity net gain' in Planning Practice Guidance to distinguish it from other or more general biodiversity gains.



'Biodiversity net gain' in England



Biodiversity gain plan

Submit a biodiversity gain plan to show how your development will achieve biodiversity net gain.

When to use this form

A biodiversity gain plan shows how a development will achieve 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG). Submit this form to your local planning authority after they approve your planning application.

Unless your development is exempt, you cannot start the development until the LPA approves your biodiversity gain plan and biodiversity metric calculation tool.

1. Submission details

1.1 Date

For example, 3/11/2023

1.2 Planning application reference number

1.3 Local planning authority (LPA)

1.4 Development site address

If the site does not have an address, enter the OS grid reference.

1.5 Describe the development

Tell us about the proposed development and any changes of use (250 words).

2. Developer details

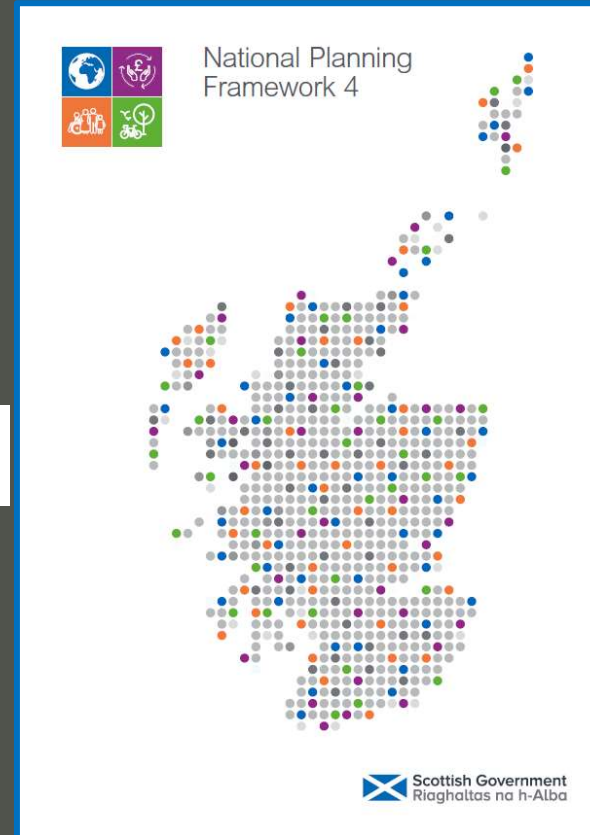
2.1 Applicant name



Different contexts 'Biodiversity net gain' in England vs Biodiversity enhancement in Scotland



versus



Who should use the metric tool and why

If your development has to meet [mandatory biodiversity net gain \(BNG\) requirements](#), it will need to use the metric tool.

The requirement to use the biodiversity metric will take effect at different times, depending on the size of the development. The relevant metric tool should be used for:

- major developments
- small developments from 2 April 2024
- nationally significant infrastructure projects from late November 2025

What is a major development?

A major development provides:

- 10 or more houses or flats or
- buildings where the floor space to be created is 1,000 square metres or greater.

Exempt developments

Some developments are exempt from the metric tool.

[Find out what types of development are exempt](#)

Developments below the threshold

A development that does not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than:

- 25 square metres (5m by 5m) of on-site habitat
- 5 metres of on-site linear habitats such as hedgerows

A development "impacts" a habitat if it [decreases the biodiversity value](#).

[Find out more about this exemption](#).

Householder applications

These are applications made by householders as defined within [article 2\(1\) of the Town and Country Planning \(Development Management Procedure\) \(England\) Order 2015](#).

It includes, for example, small projects like home extensions, conservatories or loft conversions.

Self-build and custom build applications

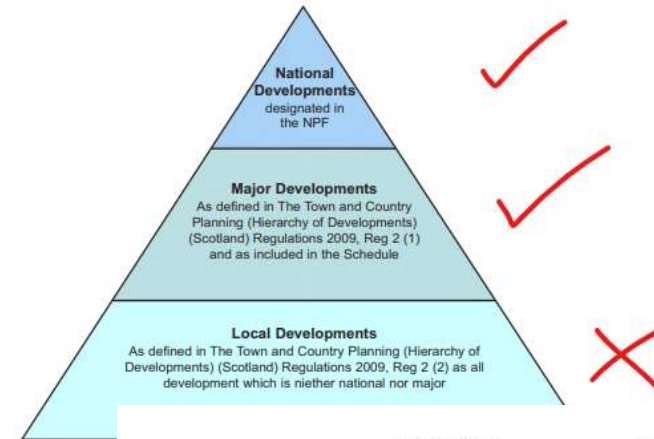
You must meet all of the following conditions to qualify for an exemption as a self-build or custom build.

The development must:

versus



The hierarchy is reflected in the diagram below.



SCHEDULE Major Developments

Regulation 2(1)

Description of development	Threshold or criterion
1. Schedule 1 development	
Development of a description mentioned in Schedule 1 to the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 1999(a) (other than exempt development within the meaning of those Regulations).	All development.
2. Housing	
Construction of buildings, structures or erections for use as residential accommodation.	(a) The development comprises 50 or more dwellings; or (b) The area of the site is or exceeds 2 hectares.
3. Business & General Industry, Storage and Distribution	
Construction of a building, structure or other erection for use for any of the following:	(a) The gross floor space of the building, structure or other erection is or exceeds

The statutory biodiversity metric calculation tools must be submitted as part of the Biodiversity Gain Plan to demonstrate the statutory biodiversity metric formula has been accurately applied.

Microsoft Excel

File Home Insert Page Layout Formulas Data Review View Automate Help Acrobat

Clipboard Font Alignment Number Styles Cells Editing Sensitivity Add-ins Analyse Data Edit New Version Release and Close Document Details Settings Create a PDF and Share link Adobe Acrobat

E13 : X ✓ fx

Project Name: Map Reference:						Area habitat summary						
A-1 On-Site Habitat Baseline						Total Net Unit Change	21.39					
						Total Net % Change	8.91%					
						Trading Rules Satisfied	Yes ✓					

Condense / Show Columns Condense / Show Rows Main Menu

Existing area habitats					Distinctiveness		Condition		Strategic significance			Ref
Ref	Broad Habitat	Habitat Type	Irreplaceable habitat	Area (hectares)	Distinctiveness	Score	Condition	Score	Strategic significance	Strategic significance	Strategic significance multiplier	
2	Wetland	Blanket bog	Yes	10	V.High	8	Moderate	2	Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	Bespoke
3												
4												
5												
6												
7												
8												
9												
10												
11												
12												
13												
14												
15												

Start Main Menu A-1 On-Site Habitat Baseline A-3 On-Site Habitat Enhancement D-3 Off-Site Habitat Enhancement +



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

The Statutory Biodiversity Metric

User Guide

First published: February 2024

Last updated: July 2024



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Scotland's Nature Agency
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Statutory_Biodiversity_Metric_Condition_Assessments23.07.24 (4)

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Number

Conditional Formatting

Format as Table

Cell Styles

Styles

Insert

Delete

Format

Cells

Editing

Sensitivity

Sensitivity

Add-ins

Add-ins

Analyse Data

Add-ins

Edit New Version

Add-ins

A1

Condition Sheet: WETLAND Habitat Type

Condition Sheet: WETLAND Habitat Type

[Return to "Selecting condition sheet" tab](#)

Wetland – Depression on peat substrates (mires)

Wetland – Fens (upland and lowland)

Wetland – Lowland raised bog

Wetland – Oceanic valley mire [1] (D2.1)

Wetland – Purple moor grass and rush pastures

Wetland – Reedbeds

Wetland – Transition mires and quaking bogs (H7140)

Habitat Description

[or Oceanic valley mires – see EUNIS](#)

See the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide for Floodplain wetland mosaic (FwM) and coastal and floodplain grazing marsh (CFGm). For CFGm also see the below:

[coastal and floodplain grazing marsh UK BAP Priority Habitat description](#)

[Priority Habitat Inventory \(England\) – data.gov.uk](#)

All other wetland habitats – see UK Habitat Classification (UKHab):

[UKHab](#)

On-site or off-site, site name and location

Survey date and Surveyor

Limitations (if applicable)

Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)

Grid reference

Habitat parcel reference

Condition Assessment Criteria

Criterion passed (Yes or

Notes (such as justification)

Core Criteria – must be assessed for all wetland habitat types:

The water table is at, or near the surface throughout the year – this could be open water or saturation of soil at the surface. There is no artificial drainage, unless specifically to maintain water levels as specified above.

Note – this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition.

The parcel represents a good example of its specific habitat type – the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches its UKHab description, with vascular and non-

<>...

20A.SCRUB

20B.SCRUB

21A.SPARSELY VEGETATED LAND

21B.SPARSELY VEGETATED LAND

22A.URBAN

22B.URBAN

23A.WETLAND

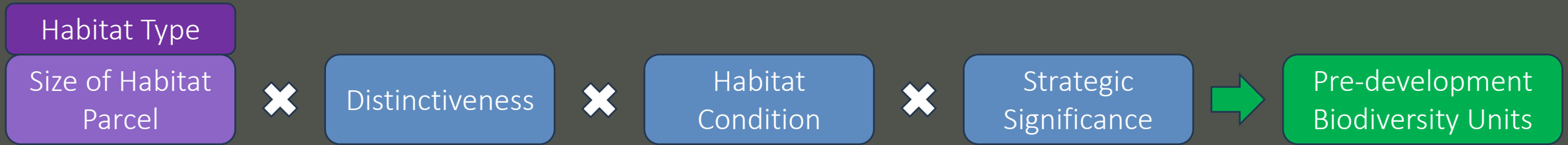
23B.WETLAND

2

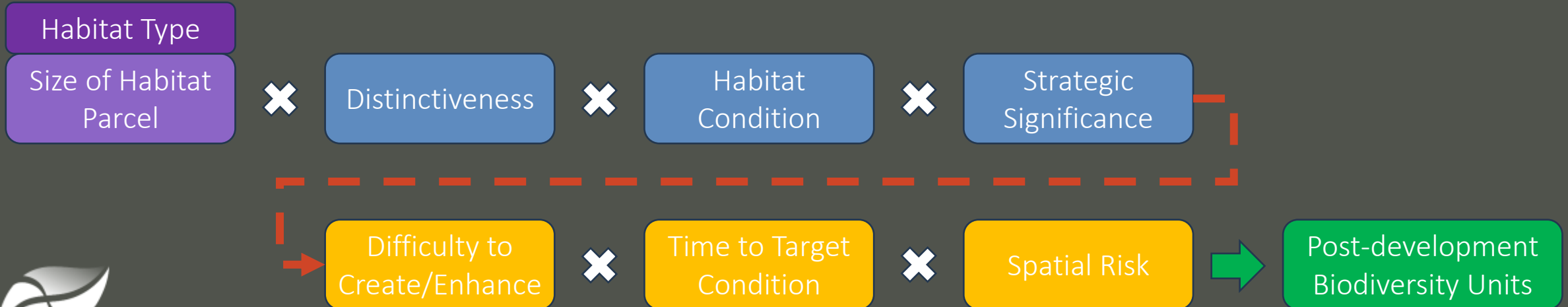


English Statutory Biodiversity Metric

Baseline/Pre-development Biodiversity



Post-development Biodiversity

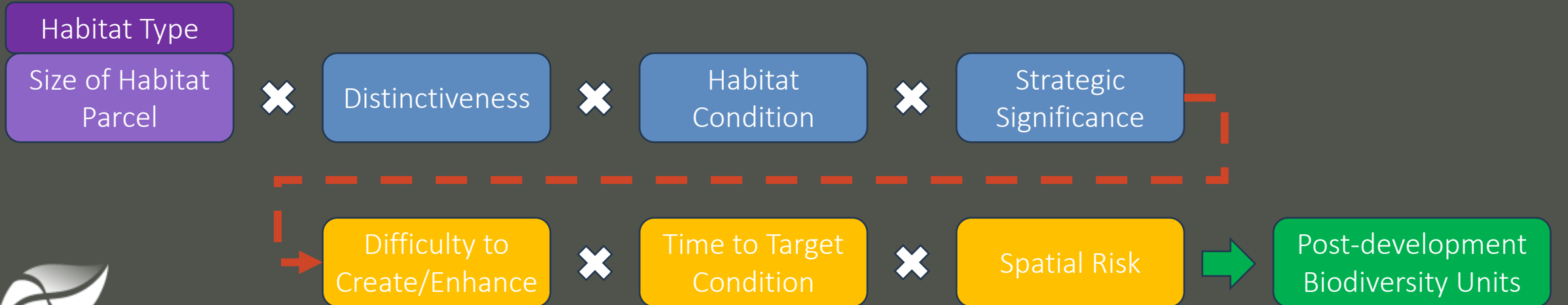


English Statutory Biodiversity Metric

Baseline/Pre-development Biodiversity

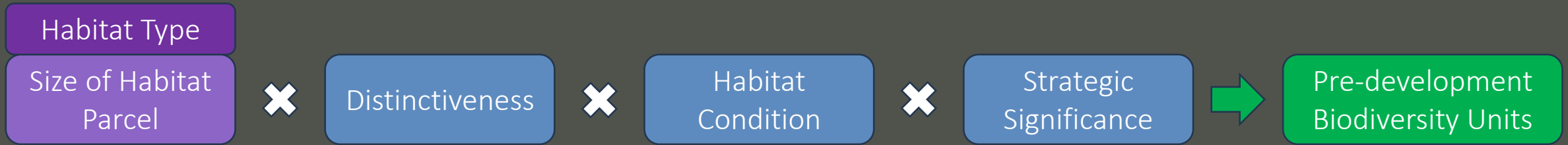


Post-development Biodiversity

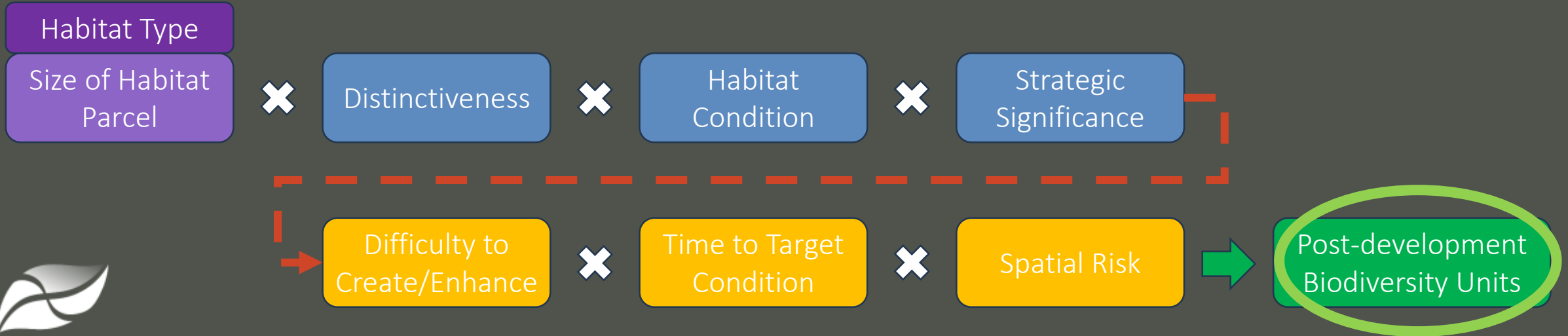


English Statutory Biodiversity Metric

Baseline/Pre-development Biodiversity

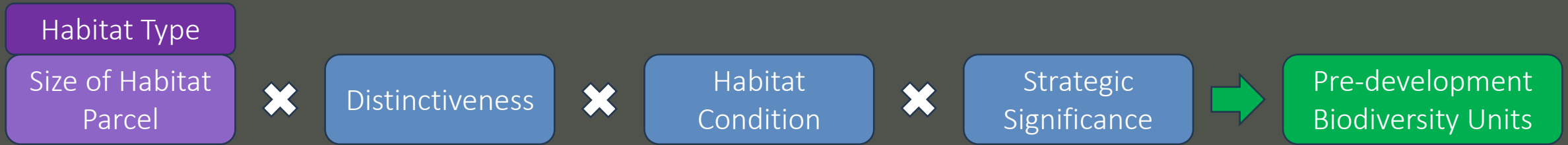


Post-development Biodiversity

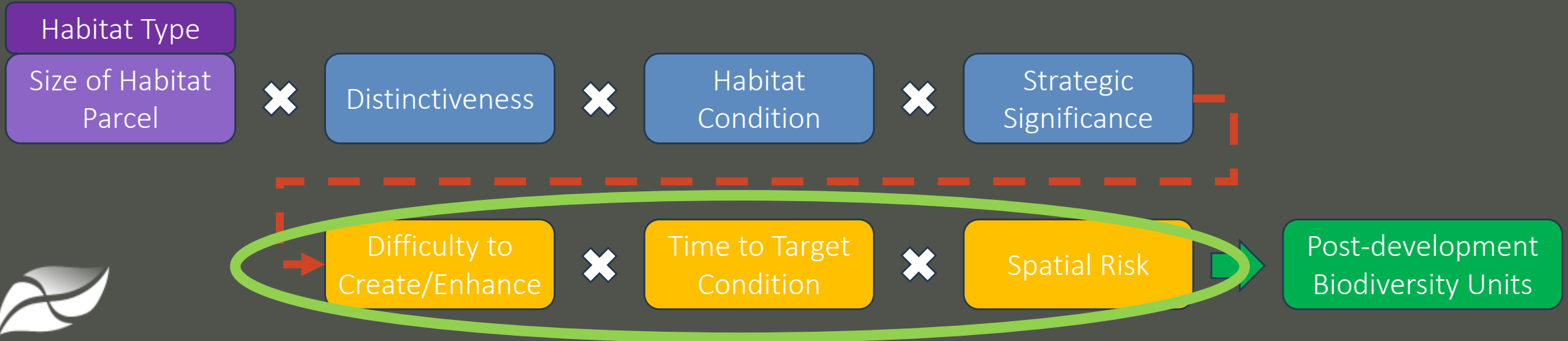


English Statutory Biodiversity Metric

Baseline/Pre-development Biodiversity



Post-development Biodiversity



English Statutory Biodiversity Metric

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Menu

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Home > Environment > Wildlife, animals, biodiversity and ecosystems > Biodiversity and ecosystems

Guidance

Irreplaceable habitat

How biodiversity net gain (BNG) applies to irreplaceable habitat.

From: [Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs](#)
Published 22 February 2024
Last updated 4 September 2024 — [See all updates](#)

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Applies to England

Related content

Contents

- What irreplaceable habitat is
- Development on irreplaceable habitat
- Compensation rules for irreplaceable habitat
- What developers need to do
- 1. Consider irreplaceable habitat from the start
- 2. Record irreplaceable habitat in your BNG calculation
- 3. Record irreplaceable habitat in the biodiversity gain plan

Detailed guidance

[Calculate biodiversity value statutory biodiversity metric](#)

[Creating a habitat management monitoring plan for BNG](#)

[Meet biodiversity net gain requirements for developers](#)

[Submit a biodiversity gain plan](#)



Project Name: Map Reference: A-1 On-Site Habitat Baseline									
Consent / More Columns					Consent / More Rows				
Main Map					Area habitat necessary				
					Total Net Unit Change	-847			
					Total Net Unit Change	-847			
					Trading Rules Satisfied	No - check trading summations			
Existing area habitats					Distinctiveness	Condition	Strategic significance		
Dist	Broad Habitat	Habitat Type	Irreplaceable habitat	Area	Distinctiveness	Score	Condition	Score	Required Action to Meet Trading Rules
1	Wetland	Shrubland	Yes	10	High	10	Poor	1	Require compensation to be required
2	Woodland and forest	Upland broad leaf forest	No	10	High	10	Moderate	2	Some action required
3	Cropland	Cereals	No	10	Low	2	Good	1	Some action required

Difficulty to
Create/Enhance

Habitat type, extent and condition are determined by expert site survey. Other criteria are pre-determined

English Statutory Biodiversity Metric

Baseline

Post-development

Table 3-2 Trading rules (Rule 3) to compensate for losses

Baseline habitat distinctiveness	Area module (area units)	Hedgerow module (hedgerow units)	Watercourse module (watercourse units)
Very high	Losses are not permitted within this metric AND bespoke assessment and compensation are required	Losses must be replaced with hedgerow units of the same habitat type	Losses are not permitted within this metric AND bespoke assessment and compensation are required
High	Losses must be replaced with area units of the same habitat type	Losses must be replaced with hedgerow units of the same habitat type or of a higher distinctiveness band	Losses must be replaced with watercourse units of the same habitat type
Medium	Losses must be replaced by area units of either: medium distinctiveness habitats within the same broad habitat type OR any habitat from a higher distinctiveness band (from any broad habitat type)	Losses must be replaced with hedgerow units of the same or higher distinctiveness band	Losses must be replaced with watercourse units of the same or higher distinctiveness band
Low	Losses must be replaced with area units of the same or higher distinctiveness band	Losses must be replaced with hedgerow units of the same or higher distinctiveness band	Losses must be replaced with watercourse units of the same or higher distinctiveness band

Biodiversity

Distinctiveness

Habitat Condition

Strategic Significance

Pre-development Biodiversity Units

Project Name: Map Reference:

1-1 On-Site Habitat Baseline

Show Columns

Condense / Show Rows

Menu

Area habitat summary

Total Net Unit Change	-0.47
Total Net % Change	-0.34%
Trading Rules Satisfied	No - check trading summaries A

Existing area habitats			Distinctiveness		Condition		Strategic significance			Required Action to Meet Trading Rules	Ecological baseline
Habitat Type	Irreplaceable habitat	Area (hectares)	Distinctiveness	Score	Condition	Score	Strategic significance	Strategic significance	Strategic significance multiplier		
Blanket bog	Yes	10	V.High	8	Poor	1	Area/compensation not in local strategy/no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	Bespoke compensation likely to be required	0.00
Upland mixed ash/sods	No	10	High	6	Moderate	2	Area/compensation not in local strategy/no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	Same habitat required +	130.00
Cereal crops	No	10	Low	2	Condition Assessment N/A	1	Area/compensation not in local strategy/no local strategy	Low Strategic Significance	1	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required	20.00

The Biodiversity Metric 4.0 – User Guide

Baseline habitat distinctiveness	Area module (area units)	Hedgerow module (hedgerow units)	Watercourse module (watercourse units)
Very low	Not applicable	Losses must be replaced with hedgerow units of the same or higher	Not applicable

Difficulty to Create/Enhance

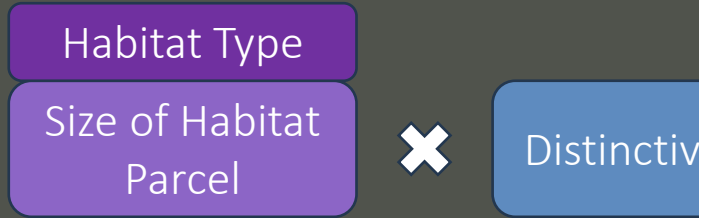
Time to Target Condition

Spatial Risk

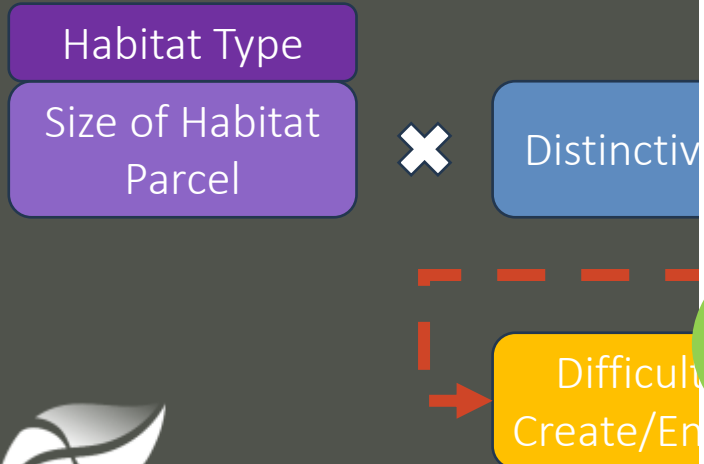
Post-development Biodiversity Units

English Statutory Biodiversity Metric

Baseline/Pre-development Biodiversity



Post-development Biodiversity



Use of the biodiversity metric tool

The biodiversity metric tool is used to calculate biodiversity value for the purposes of biodiversity net gain.

[Find out more about biodiversity net gain and if you need to use this tool.](#)

You can use the biodiversity metric tool to calculate the biodiversity value of:

- existing habitats
- habitat enhancement
- habitat creation

The biodiversity metric tool can calculate different types of 'biodiversity units'. There are three types of biodiversity units, which are calculated in three separate 'modules' of the metric. These are:

- area habitat units
- hedgerow units
- watercourse units

The biodiversity metric tool can be used throughout all stages of a project, from site

English Statutory Biodiversity Metric

Biodiversity Net Gain?

Post-development
Biodiversity Units

—

Pre-development
Biodiversity Units

=

Uplift in Biodiversity
Units Delivered

- Developments **must** achieve at least 10% BNG
- Created or enhanced habitats must be managed for a minimum of 30 years



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A Biodiversity Metric for Scotland's Planning System

You can download a copy of this document, here:








Information hub

Publications and documents

Latest metric (4)

September 2024

Our consultation 2024 - A summary

A roundtable discussion and comments and

Contents

1. Response to Consultation
2. Overview of Key Themes Identified in Consultation Responses
 - 2.1 Q.1 Rules and Principles
 - 2.2 Q.2 Habitat Classification
 - 2.3 Q.3 Irreplaceable Habitats
 - 2.4 Q.4 Habitat Distinctiveness
 - 2.5 Q.5 Habitat Condition
 - 2.6 Q.6 Strategic Significance
 - 2.7 Q.7 Difficulty Risk
 - 2.8 Q.8 Temporal Risk
 - 2.9 Q.9 Spatial Risk
 - 2.10 Q.10 Phased Approach and Priorities
3. Summary and Next Steps

NatureScot has been commissioned by the Scottish Government to develop a biodiversity metric for Scotland's planning system, suitable for use in supporting delivery of National Planning Framework 4.

To inform the metric's development, NatureScot consulted on [System – Key issues](#) from 4th April to 10th May 2024 (latest version 1.0).

Roundtable discussion on the development of a Biodiversity Planning Metric

Publications and documents

You can download a copy of this document, here:








1 May 2024 – online

The roundtable was jointly organised by the Scottish Government's Planning, Architecture and Regeneration Division, NatureScot and CIEEM to take place during the initial consultation stage of the development of a Scottish biodiversity planning metric. The roundtable discussion was an opportunity to discuss the proposed scope and approach to this work, highlight existing experience in Scotland and to discuss priorities, opportunities and challenges.

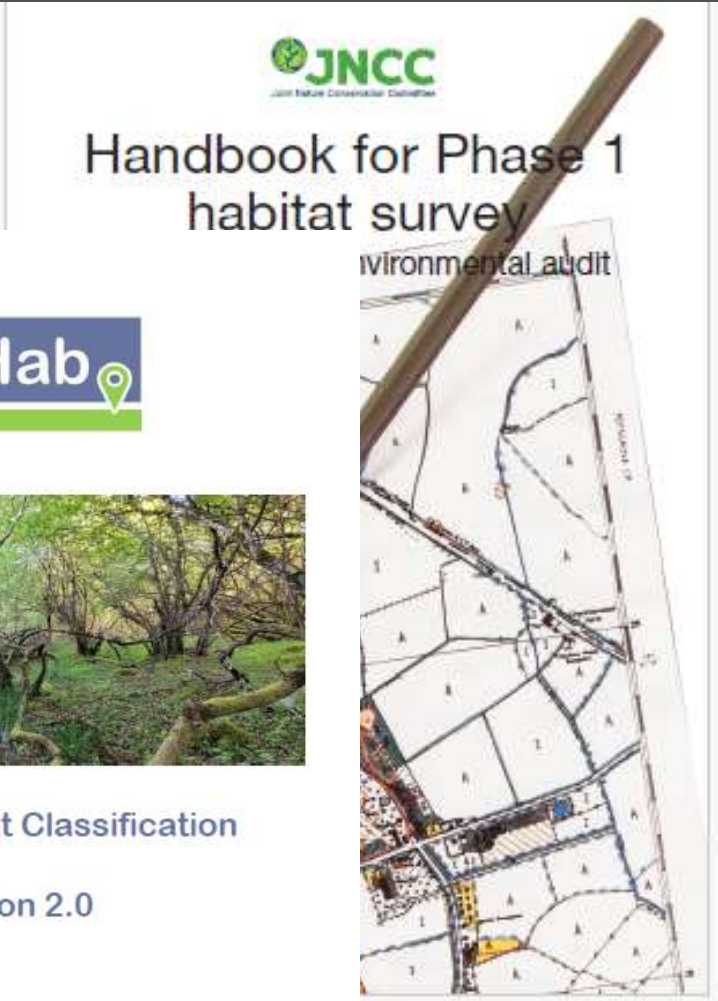
The roundtable was chaired by CIEEM and facilitated by NatureScot. The questions given below were designed to prompt discussion. However, all comments and topics were welcomed.

Overarching Messages

- Several stakeholders present at the meeting have experience of using England's biodiversity metric tool (often referred to as the 'Defra metric' or England's statutory biodiversity metric), or adaptations of that metric, in a Scottish context and would be keen to share this knowledge to help develop a metric for Scotland.
- The overall aim should be good outcomes for nature, and it will be important to ensure ecologically beneficial decisions are



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The UK Habitat Classification

Version 2.0

Broad habitat	Classification system
Most terrestrial habitats	UKHab Level 4
Intertidal, coastal & shore habitats	European Nature Information System (EUNIS) Level 3
Lakes	Water Framework Directive Lake Typologies UK
Waterways	UKHab Level 4
Hedgerows	Metric specific (draws from Hedgerow Survey Handbook)
Green roofs, Urban trees	Metric specific







What works well about a biodiversity metric?



What type of preparations would help a Scottish biodiversity metric work well for planning authorities?

Form

Biodiversity gain plan

Developers should fill in this form to show how a development will achieve biodiversity net gain (BNG).

From: [Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs](#)
Published: 20 November 2023
Last updated: 9 October 2024 — [See all updates](#)

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Applies to England

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[Biodiversity net gain](#)

Documents

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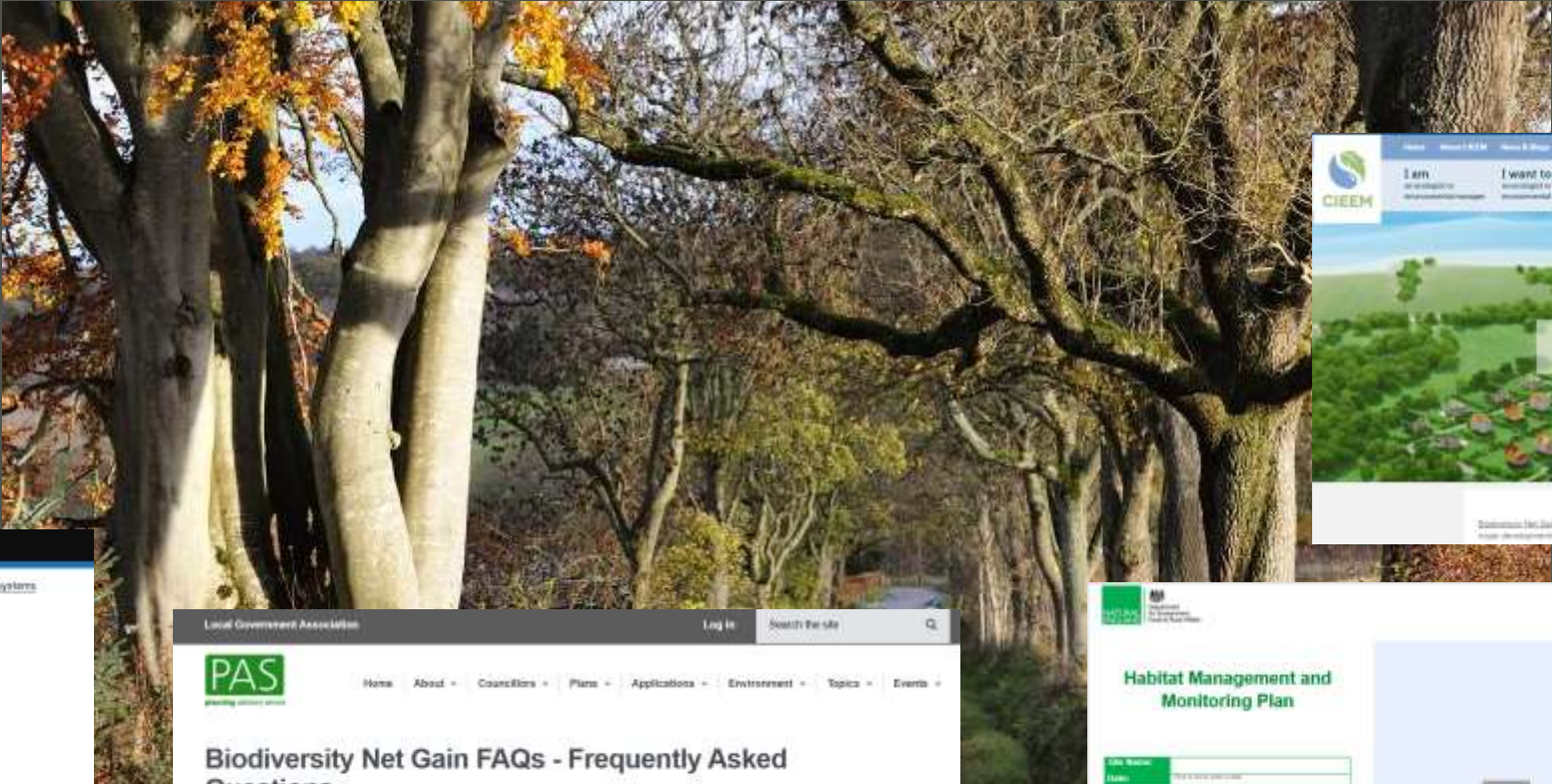
[Biodiversity gain plan template](#)

PDF, 240 KB, 10 pages

 Word

[Biodiversity gain plan template](#)

MS Word Document, 53.4 KB





I am an ecological management expert

I want to be an ecological management expert

I need an ecological management expert



Statutory guidance BNG is a mandatory part of the planning process across England for new developments and small sites. Here you can find a wealth of resources to help you get to grips.

In this section

GOV.UK

[Home](#) > [Environment](#) > [Wildlife, animals, biodiversity and ecosystems](#) > [Biodiversity and ecosystems](#)

Guidance

Register a biodiversity site and allocate to a development

Find out what to do if you need to register a biodiversity gain site and record allocation of off-site biodiversity gains to a development at the same time.

From: [Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and Natural England](#)
Published: 12 February 2024
Last updated: 15 April 2024 — [See all updates](#)

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Biodiversity Net Gain FAQs - Frequently Asked Questions

Most recent page update 01.08.24. We have worked with Defra, Natural England and MHCLG on these FAQs. Much of this information was produced prior to BNG going live in February 2024, and we have been periodically pruning and updating it. Please do email pas@local.gov.uk if you spot any errors. If you have questions that are not covered on this page and see a local authority officer you can join our BNG practitioner network, which has an online forum for posting questions, discussing issues and sharing knowledge. See below for joining details.

General

[Resourcing](#)

[Local Plans](#)

[Decision-making](#)

[Off-site BNG, BNG markets and](#)

General

This page is part of a set of resources PAS is working on to help local authorities implement mandatory biodiversity net gain. You can find links to these resources via our front BNG for local authorities' page. We also have a BNG practitioner network for local authority officers with an online forum and regular meetings. Fill in [this form](#) if you would like to join.

[Privacy settings](#)



Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan

Site Name

Location

Variation

Author

Editor

1. Project Background

2. Project Description

3. Project Objectives

4. Project Outcomes

5. Project Evaluation

6. Project Monitoring

7. Project Reporting

8. Project Review

9. Project Closure

10. Project Legacy

In the interim, can things be done to help planning authorities better considering biodiversity enhancement?

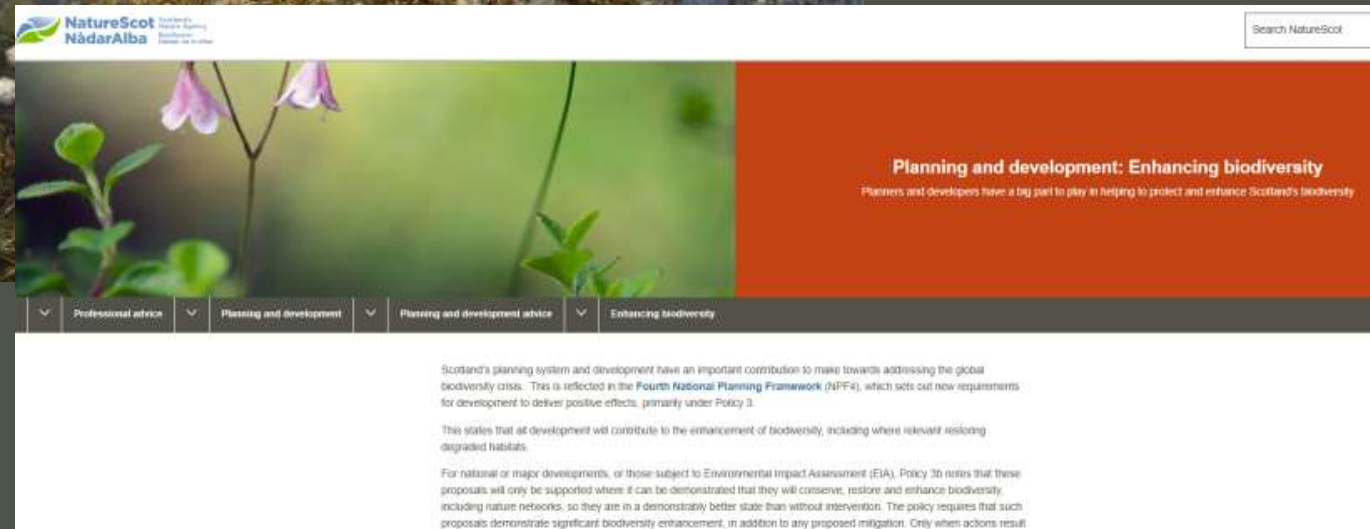
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November 2023



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**Scottish Government
Draft Planning Guidance:
Biodiversity**

November 2023

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- 4.6. It will be for the applicant to demonstrate, through the planning application, those ways in which biodiversity will be left in a 'demonstrably better state' than before intervention. NPF4 does not specify or require a particular assessment approach or methodology to be used, though the policy makes clear best practice assessment methods should be utilised.
- 4.7. Assessment may be qualitative or quantitative (for example through use of a metric) and where relevant should align with existing statutory and other assessment requirements, taking an integrated approach to avoid duplication

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- 4.11. The Scottish Government commissioned research into Approaches to Measuring Biodiversity in Scotland, a [report](#) on which was published in September 2023. That research concluded that, with refinement, Natural England's Biodiversity Metric 3.1 could be adapted for planning and development use in Scotland. Whilst this conclusion relates to Metric 3.1, broad conclusions are considered likely to remain the same for Metric 4.0 which was published on 24th March 2023. NatureScot will shortly commence work to develop an adapted biodiversity metric suitable for use in supporting delivery of NPF4 policy 3b. Further information will be provided on this work in due course.
- 4.12. In the meantime, the absence of a universally adopted Scottish methodology/tool should not be used to frustrate or delay decision making, and a flexible approach will be required. Wherever relevant and applicable, and as indicated above, information and evidence gathered for statutory and other assessment obligations, such as EIA, can be utilised to demonstrate those ways in which the policy tests set out in NPF4 have been met. Equally, where a developer wishes to use an established metric or tool, the planning submission should demonstrate how Scotland's habitats and environmental conditions have been taken into account. Where an established metric or tool has been modified, the changes made and the reasons for this should be clearly set out.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

Toolkit User Guide v2.2



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Biodiversity Enhancement Planning Guidance

Stiùireadh Meudachadh Planadh Bith-iomadachd



There is no requirement to use a Biodiversity Net Gain Metric, although it may be a useful tool to clearly demonstrate how a development proposal will meet the NPF4 policy tests and deliver biodiversity enhancement.

has been achieved. Until a Scottish metric is available and to assist the smooth passage of the application, it is recommended that England's Statutory Metric is used to demonstrate and to justify the type and extent of biodiversity enhancement proposed. Until a Scottish metric is available, applicants may wish to use an alternative metric, adapt or amend England's Statutory metric or utilise a different methodology. Where these or other alternative approaches have been taken the rationale must be clearly justified and set out in a supporting statement. Where habitat enhancement measures cannot be accurately taken into account

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Planning and development: Enhancing biodiversity

Planners and developers have a big part to play in helping to protect and enhance Scotland's biodiversity

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Enhancing biodiversity

Scotland's planning system and development have an important contribution to make towards addressing the global biodiversity crisis. This is reflected in the **Fourth National Planning Framework (NPF4)**, which sets out new requirements for development to deliver positive effects, primarily under Policy 3.

This states that all development will contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity, including where relevant restoring degraded habitats.

For natural or major developments, or those subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Policy 3b notes that these proposals will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that they will conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity, including nature networks, so they are in a demonstrably better state than without intervention. The policy requires that such proposals demonstrate significant biodiversity enhancement, in addition to any proposed mitigation. Only when actions result



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“The biodiversity metric does not address impacts on species, recognise the significance of site designations, or take account of indirect impacts, cumulative impacts or in-combination impacts. In recognition of these limitations, the biodiversity net gain requirement for development on such sites is additional to any existing legal or policy requirements for statutory protected areas and their features.”

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Annex C: Example template for demonstrating delivery of positive effects

C.1. This template is suggested for use by larger and more significant local development applications, to show how appropriate measures have been included to deliver positive effects for biodiversity (in the absence of other structured reports providing this evidence). The information set out under the Mitigation and Enhancement columns should present a clear distinction between those actions and measures mitigating the impact of the development, and those delivering enhanced biodiversity.

Delivering positive effects

The site	Brief description of development site (those aspects relevant to delivering positive effects), including existing land use, land cover, habitats and key species Confirm the type (desk based or field survey), level and timing of study undertaken
The proposed development	Brief description of the development (those aspects relevant to delivering positive effects), identifying its main components (for example, the type / form of buildings and structures, public and private greenspace, infrastructure such as access, etc.) List of key plan drawings, elevations and other documents setting out proposed biodiversity measures and future management
Relevant strategies, plans & documents informing measures	Summary of any biodiversity requirements or considerations relevant to the site or development, identified in the Local Development Plan and other documents (for example, Green Network Strategy, Forestry and Woodland Strategy, Open Space Strategy, etc.) Note of any local nature designated sites, LBAP priority habitats or species relevant to the site or development (these may be on-site, adjacent to, or in the vicinity of the development site)
Stakeholder engagement	Summary of any engagement with local authority ecologist, local environmental records centre / local biodiversity action partnership, and key findings Summary of any engagement with local wildlife and community groups and other NGOs, and key findings

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Thank you!

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