



For decision

Title: Cairngorms Nature Action Plan 2019 – 2024 final report

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Strategic context

1. The Cairngorms Nature Action Plan is one of the four key strategies which support delivery of the National Park Partnership Plan. It is the primary delivery mechanism for the outcome of 'A carbon negative and biodiversity rich National Park with better functioning, better connected and more resilient ecosystems and all associated objectives and targets.
2. The Cairngorms Nature Action Plan provides the structural framework to guide the direct and indirect delivery of the nature theme as described in the corporate plan.
3. The Action Plan does not replace but rather complements, supports and builds on a wide range of national strategies, policies and plans relating to the environment and land use, for example: Scottish Forestry Strategy, Scottish Biodiversity Strategy, Wild Deer: A National Approach, Scotland's Climate Change Plan and River Basin Management Plans.

Purpose

4. This paper presents the report detailing delivery of priorities, actions and targets in the Cairngorms Nature Action Plan 2019 – 2024, for approval prior to publication.
5. It considers the role of the Cairngorms Nature partnership as the key mechanism directing and delivering conservation in the National Park and the National Park Partnership Plan nature objectives.

Recommendations

6. The Board is asked to:
 - a) Note key achievements of the partnership and delivery against targets
 - b) Approve the publication of the report



Strategic policy consideration

7. Board approved the Cairngorms Nature Action Plan 2019 – 2024 on 07 December 2018 as the agreed priorities and objectives for conservation work over the five-year period and as the framework for the collaborative actions necessary to deliver them.

Stakeholder engagement

8. The Cairngorms Nature Strategy Group comprises a range of organisations and land managers with an active role in the delivery of biodiversity gain in the National Park. The group provides guidance to and oversees the implementation of the Cairngorms Nature Action Plan and wider partnership.
9. The final set of data, progress against targets and objectives, outline and content of the report was reviewed and approved by the Strategy Group, before presentation to Board for informal discussion and comments in March 2024.
10. Cairngorms Nature partners have provided data annually to establish progress against targets, case studies to highlight achievements and contributed to the production of the report as presented.

Strategic risk management

11. Targets for raptors in the Cairngorms Nature Action Plan have not been met. Collaborative working and partnership building in progressing, monitoring and reporting on this target is a remedial tool in mitigating Strategic Risk four: 'The Authority's range of powers combined with strategic partnerships is insufficient to deliver outcomes on wildlife crime'.
12. Lessons learnt highlighted in the report note there are factors out with the sphere of influence of Cairngorms Nature which have an impact on delivery and attainment of targets. The strategic partnership and collaborative monitoring and reporting on targets strengthens a common understanding of these multiple factors and key issues, mitigating Strategic Risk 11: 'Reputational damage may result from unrealistic expectations of the Park Authority and partners can achieve in the face of significant risks presented by climate change, species extinction, flood management and fire'.



Implications

13. The Action Plan, Strategy Group and wider partnership are core elements of delivery of the National Park Partnership plan. The strategic direction of Cairngorms Nature will remain as the primary mechanism for conservation activity in the National Park. The partnership and future action Plan will describe the activities and collaboration needed to deliver outcomes and objectives in the National Park Plan and the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy outcomes.
14. The report celebrates the collaborative working and projects delivered by all those involved in Cairngorms Nature and biodiversity gain in the National Park. The report cements the strategic partnership and is an effective means of reinforcing the core message that everyone can, and does, play a part in protecting and enhancing the outstanding natural heritage of the Cairngorms.

Success measures

15. Subject to approval by Board, the final report on delivery of the Cairngorms Nature Action Plan 2019 – 2024 will be circulated amongst the Cairngorms Nature Strategy Group in September 2024 and subsequently to wider stakeholders and partners.
16. Further communication and publication on the website will be reviewed in light of current spending restrictions on communications and engagement. A review of key achievements and lessons learnt will form part of the launch of the forthcoming Action Plan 2025 – 2030 and plans for Cairngorms Nature going forwards.
17. The Cairngorms Nature Strategy group and wider partnership will convene December 2024 to review the strengths and successes of the partnership and progress on developing the Cairngorms Nature Action Plan 2025 – 2030. The draft aims, priorities and structure will be discussed by the Board members in Spring 2025 and come back to Board for approval later in the year.

Supporting information

18. Annex 1: Cairngorms Nature Action Plan 2019 – 2024
19. Annex 2: Cairngorms Nature Action Plan 2019 – 2024 Final report.



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