
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR INFORMATION

Title: ANNUAL REVIEW OF NATIONAL PARK PLAN DELIVERY

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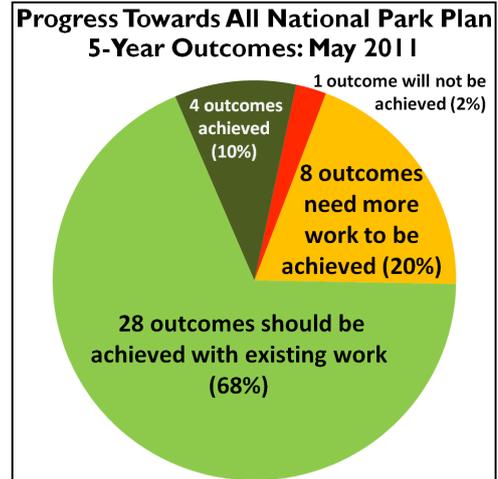
Purpose

To provide an overview of the National Park Plan process from the past year and highlight delivery of the current National Park Plan to date.

Executive Summary

The paper summarises delivery of the National Park Plan to May 2011. For each priority for action it notes the main achievements of the past year that should together give an impression of the range and scope of the National Park Plan's work.

The paper highlights that the CNPA considers 4 of the Park Plan's 5-year outcomes to have been achieved; we expect a further 28 will be achieved by 2012; that there is some uncertainty over 8 outcomes; and that we know that one outcome cannot be achieved by 2012. It also notes that there is likely to be greater change over the coming months as some outcomes are fully achieved, and it becomes apparent that some cannot be achieved as fully as was anticipated when the Park Plan was prepared.



ANNUAL REVIEW OF NATIONAL PARK PLAN DELIVERY FOR INFORMATION

Background

1. This is the third annual review of progress in delivery of the National Park Plan. It incorporates the eighth 4-monthly report on delivery but takes a broader look at the progress of delivery, the challenges CNPA and partners face in delivering the outcomes, and the ongoing challenges in making the partnership model of delivery work.
2. This annual review paper is distinct from the National Park Plan Progress Report that we are preparing for 2010/11, as we have for the past three years, and which will be distributed to partners, stakeholders and other interested parties in the summer. That report shares the successes that partners have delivered during 2010/11 and highlights case studies in each priority for action.

Summary of Delivery 2010/11

3. We are now in the final year of delivering the current National Park Plan, and also working to develop a second National Park Plan for the period 2012-2017. This is a particularly intense period of work and action to complete delivery of the current Park Plan as well as review and assessment of progress made and future priorities.
4. This report contains the first assessments of 5-year outcomes being achieved. By May 2012, we expect more outcomes to be fully achieved as final pieces of work are completed. It is also likely that there will be more outcomes that we have been unable to achieve in the way we wanted. For some of those outcomes where we have made substantial progress, it may simply take longer to achieve originally thought. For others, we may have to accept that we were unrealistic about what we could achieve, and use that knowledge to be smarter in future.

Achievements of the Priorities for Action during 2010/11

5. Each of the Park Plan's seven priorities for action has had many achievements during the past year. They will be publicised in the annual progress report for 2010/11, but as a brief reminder, a few achievements from each priority for action have been listed below. Together, they provide a good overview of the range of work and issues that the National Park Plan is tackling.

Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Landscapes

- a) The completion of the third complete Strathspey wader survey and giving tailored feedback to farmers and land managers about wading bird numbers and distribution on their land through the Strathspey Wetland and Waders Initiative;
- b) The operation of the Cairngorms Rare Plants Project;
- c) The operation of the Cairngorms Wildcat Project and national media coverage of wildcat;

- d) The extension of the Raptor Track project to include more birds and raptor species;
- e) Revision and updating of the Cairngorms Landscape Character Assessment;
- f) Development of the 'Views from the Road' project that identifies the best views of the special landscapes of the Park from main roads;
- g) The reforming of the River Spey Catchment Management Partnership;
- h) The development of community cultural heritage projects including the Shinty Heritage project between Kingussie and Newtonmore shinty clubs, and the cultural heritage 'Taster' days in Braemar and Ballater.

Integrating Public Support for Land Management

- a) Continued implementation of the Woodfuel action plan;
- b) Continued operation and support for the Cairngorms Farmers Forum;
- c) Approval of at least £1m for land management and public benefits under the SRDP.

Supporting Sustainable Deer Management

- a) Completion of the Cairngorms Deer Framework;
- b) The trial of techniques to map deer managers aspirations in the Cairngorms Speyside Deer Management Group area;
- c) Support for training towards a Deer Stalking Certificate to encourage a wider range of people to participate in deer stalking;
- d) Development of venison as a local food product through the Food for Life initiative.

Providing High Quality Opportunities for Outdoor Access

- a) Improvements to core paths throughout the Park;
- b) The Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust's development of the Cairngorms Mountain Heritage Project to use £2.1 million to repair 94km of eroded paths in the mountains;
- c) Continued growth in number of number of health walk schemes in the National Park and people using the schemes.

Making Tourism and Business More Sustainable

- a) Review of Sustainable Tourism Strategy by the Sustainable Tourism Forum
- b) Development of the Marketing Framework and Business Plan by the Cairngorms Business Partnership, and provision of a 3-year public funding programme to support specific outcomes;
- c) The Adventure Travel Trade Association's (ATTA) Adventure Travel World Summit held in Aviemore in October 2010;
- d) Development of the Cairngorms 'Food for Life' Project including the approval of LEADER funding to deliver it, the appointment of a development officer, the production of a Visitor Food Guide and a Chef's Food Guide, and research to produce a comprehensive Food and Drink Audit.

Making Housing More Affordable and Sustainable

- a) The Cairngorms National Park Local Plan and Sustainable Design Guide adopted.
- b) Development of an apprentice training scheme to help young local people train in the construction industry;

Raising Awareness and Understanding of the Park

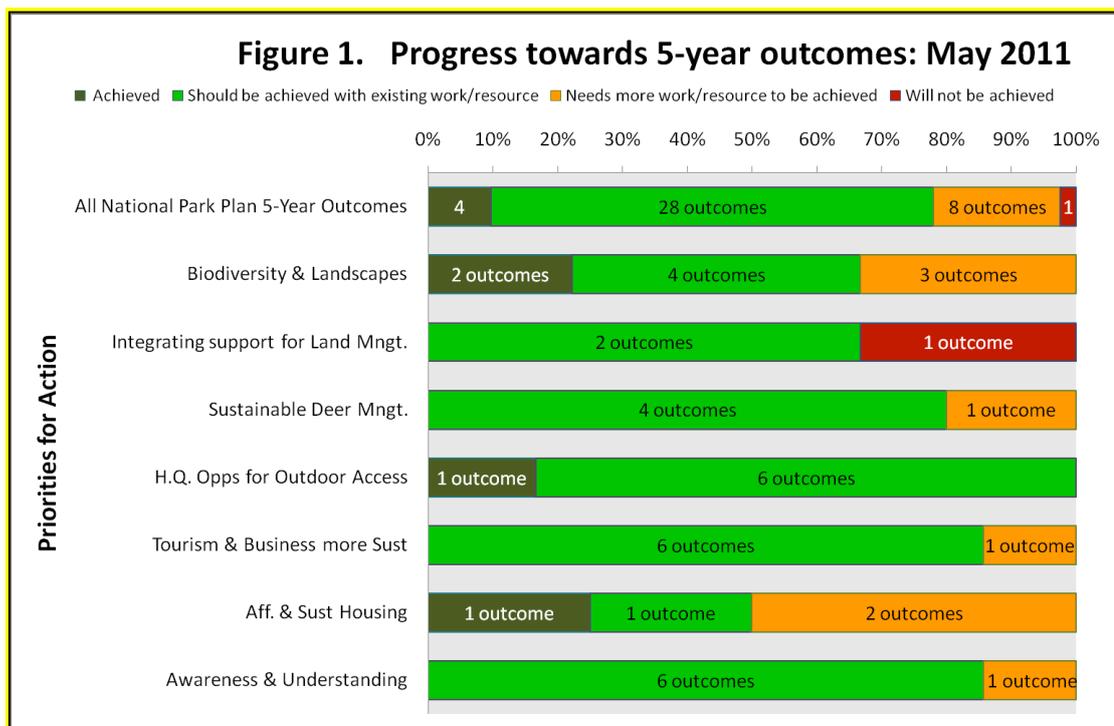
- a) The promotion of the 'Economic and Social Health of the Park' report and information as well as the completion of the second Cairngorms Visitor Survey;
- b) Completion of the Boundary Markers installation on the extended highland Perthshire boundary of the Park;
- c) Worldwide promotion of the Park following the Adventure Travel World Summit in Aviemore and National Geographic magazine's listing of the Park as one of the top twenty worldwide places to visit in 2011.
- d) National Parks becoming embedded within the Scottish Curriculum for Excellence.
- e) A Knowledge Exchange event for researchers and practitioners in the Park organised by the Centre for Mountain Studies UHI.

Achievement of Outcomes and Delivery of Actions

6. Assessments of progress are made using two 'traffic lights' systems of green-amber-red to provide an easy visual summary. The Outcomes are assessed using 5 classes associated with a specific definition:

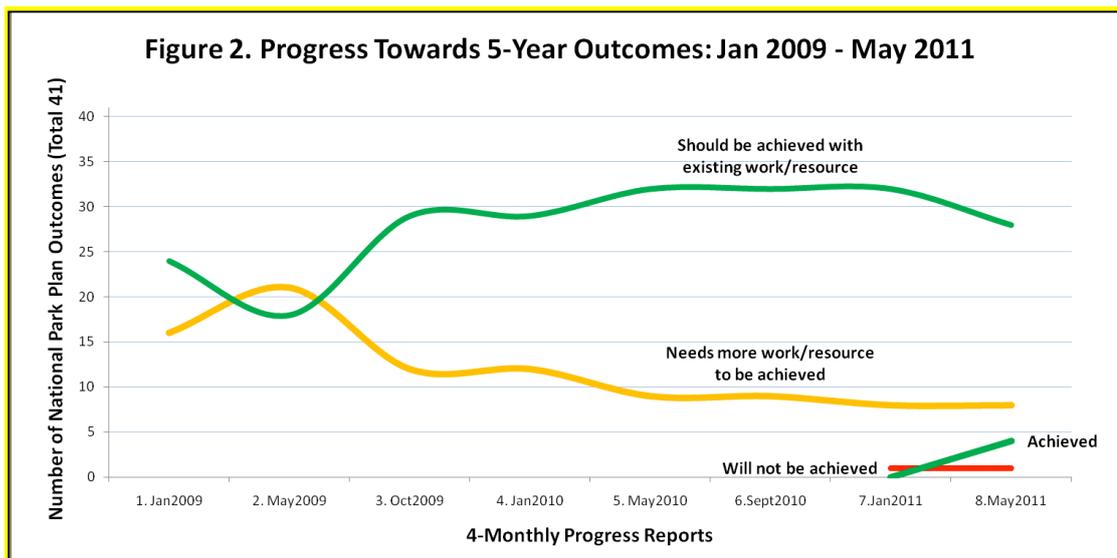
	1 Will not be achieved
	2 Unlikely to be achieved
	3 Needs more work/resource to be achieved
	4 Should be achieved with existing work/resource
	5 Achieved

7. In order to make the assessments across each priority for action as comparable as possible, they are recorded by programme managers in same format:
 - a) The number and text associated with the chosen class 1-5 above; followed by
 - b) A short justification for the assessment – why that assessment has been chosen;
 - c) A short summary of any major achievements of the Delivery Team (if not already mentioned above);
 - d) What needs to be done to move the outcome to a number 5 by 2012; and finally
 - e) A statement about the indicator or other data (if relevant).
8. The assessment is undertaken by the respective CNPA officers managing each Priority for Action. Further detail on the reasoning behind the assessment of individual outcomes is provided in the tables of Annex 1.
9. The Actions associated with each priority for action are assessed with a simpler system where:
 - a) **Green** = Progress towards the outcome or action is on track and there is confidence that the outcome or action will be achieved by, or before 2012;
 - b) **Amber** = There is uncertainty about whether the outcome or action will be achieved, or there may be delays in achieving it.
 - c) **Red** = The outcome or action will not, or is unlikely to be achieved.
10. Figure 1 shows the assessment of progress in delivering the National Park Plan's outcomes for each priority for action at May 2011.

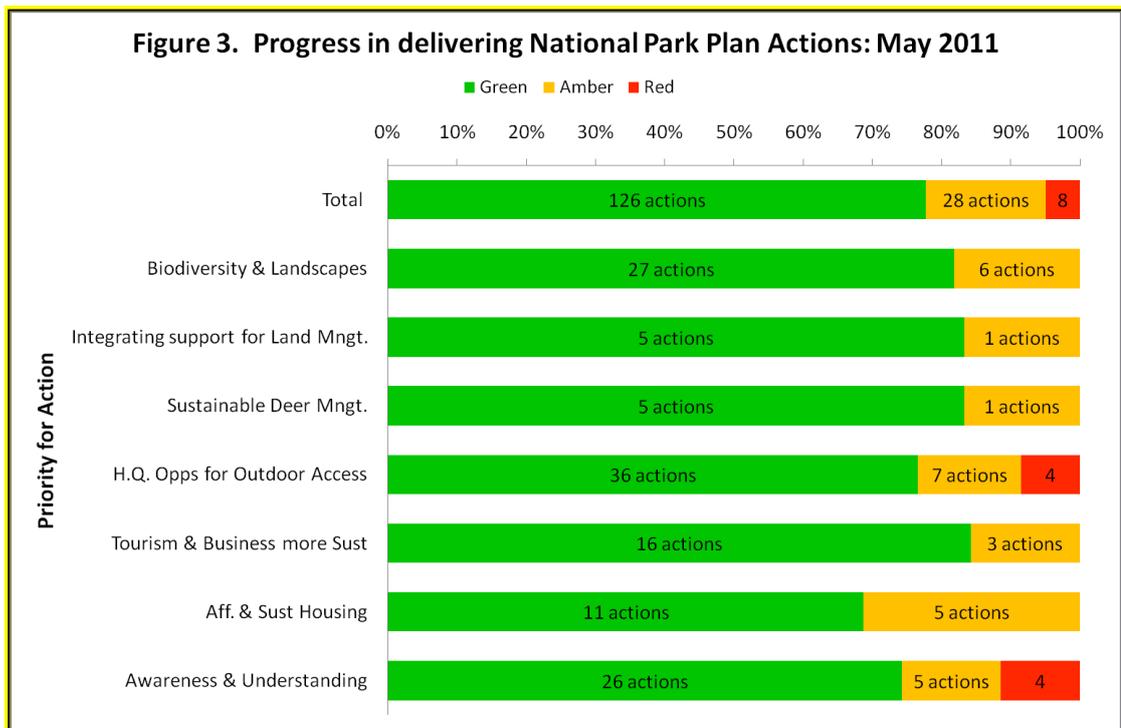


11. We now consider 4 (10%) of the 41 5-year outcomes in the Park Plan to be completed as far as possible within the current Park Plan's timescale. Two of the completed outcomes are from the 'conserving biodiversity and landscapes' priority for action (outcomes 1g & 1i on page 6 of annex 1). The third outcome is from the 'providing high quality opportunities for outdoor access' priority for action (outcome 4e, page 19 of annex 1) and the fourth from the 'making housing more affordable and sustainable' priority for action (outcome 6d, page 32 of annex 1).
12. The first 'conserving biodiversity and landscapes' outcome is about the water and habitat quality of rivers and wetlands being improved by catchment management planning, and the second is about safeguarding and recognising the geodiversity of the Park. In each case, all the work that was going to be done to deliver the outcomes has been completed, and significant changes have been made. However, both outcomes could arguably be valid in perpetuity, so further work to build on them may be appropriate in future.
13. The 'providing high quality opportunities for outdoor access' outcome is about more effective public transport connections between places of outdoor recreation. The continued production of the Cairngorms Explorer that highlights public transport connections as well as the development of community transport solutions and notable services such as the Aviemore - Cairngorm Mountain bus link mean that this outcome has been delivered as far as practical in this Park Plan period.
14. The 'making housing more affordable and sustainable' outcome is about improving the sustainability of new house design. For a variety of reasons, most new housing is now of a more sustainable design than was the case when the Park Plan was prepared.

15. We expect a further 28 outcomes (68%) to be completed this year with the existing work and resource water and that 8 outcomes (20%) require more work to be achieved.
16. One outcome will not be achieved by the end of this year. It is the outcome about the way that SRDP support is coordinated and targeted in the Park, and we have agreed to focus our efforts on improving the next programme of support in the Park.
17. Over the next three progress reports to May 2012, we will see more of the outcomes completed, moving towards completion, or for some, towards acceptance that they will not be achieved by 2012. Figure 2 shows how our assessments of progress towards the 5-year outcomes have changed over the last two and half years.



18. Figure 3 shows that nearly 80% of the actions in the Park Plan are considered to be green and on track to be delivered, with around 20% considered to be amber and requiring more attention or alternative action. A few actions are not going to be completed by 2012 due to time constraints, lack of support or resources. Some of these are simply delayed beyond 2012 and others are no longer considered appropriate.



19. The key points from the assessment of progress in delivering the Park Plan's actions and achieving its 5-year outcomes are that:
- There continues to be good progress in delivering the National Park Plan's 5-year outcomes with nearly 80% currently on track to be delivered by 2012 or already delivered;
 - There will be more change in the assessments over the coming 12 months as some outcomes are completed and as it becomes clearer that some cannot be achieved in that timescale.
20. The next steps are:
- To continue implementing the current National Park Plan 2007-2012;
 - To continue developing the next National Park Plan 2012-17.

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