
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR DECISION

Title: CAIRNGORMS NATURE ACTION PLAN 2019 - 2024

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Purpose:

This paper requests approval of the final draft of the Cairngorms Nature Action Plan 2019 - 2024

Recommendation:

That the Board approve the final draft of the Cairngorms National Park Forest Strategy.

Executive Summary:

Consultation on the draft Cairngorms Nature Action Plan took place between 20th June and 14th September 2018. The Cairngorms Nature Strategy Group reviewed consultation responses and recommended alterations, which comprise the final draft of the Action Plan (Annex I) presented to CNPA Board for approval.

The Cairngorms Nature Action Plan is the main strategic document for conservation in the National Park, one of five key strategies and plans that support delivery of the National Park Partnership Plan. It identifies agreed priority areas of work and a series of actions, providing a focus for the work of partners. The Park Authority leads the development and co-ordinates delivery. It is however a plan for all the partners involved in delivery.

The three main aims of the Plan are to:

- a) Support landscape-scale conservation and collaboration to deliver ecosystem restoration and sustainable land management, balancing environmental, social and economic factors
- b) Deliver focussed action to improve the conservation status of threatened or declining species
- c) Engage, inspire and encourage local communities and communities of interest to value and care for nature, be proud of the conservation work in the Cairngorms and want to do something to protect and enhance their natural heritage

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Strategic Context

1. Conservation in the National Park is delivered by a wide range of landowners, land managers, agencies and individuals from the private, public and third sector. Cairngorms Nature is a well-established and successful partnership which brings these various interests together with common goals to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the Park. The Action Plan sets out the agreed priorities and objectives for work over the next five years and details the collaborative actions necessary to achieve them.
2. This Action Plan has been prepared by CNPA and covers the whole Cairngorms National Park. It does not replace but rather complements and provides a context for other regional plans, for example catchment management plans and local biodiversity action plans, and sets out how work in the Cairngorms will help deliver national strategies, for example the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy.

Summary of Work to Date

3. On 15th June 2018 the CNPA Board agreed to the draft Cairngorms Nature Action Plan being made available for public consultation between 20th June and 14th September 2018. There were over 80 individual responses received via a survey monkey on-line survey, 12 formal responses from partner organisations and approximately 40 responses from a separate community consultation facilitated by Community Development Officers.
4. Alongside the consultation draft, we have drafted a Strategic Environmental Assessment, available on our website and on request.
5. Following the consultation the key changes have been made:
 - a) Providing more context for the actions; specifically on the approaches to woodland expansion and enhancement, moorland management, deer management, rewilding, species reintroductions, Cairngorms Connect and the East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership
 - b) Highlighting moorland management as a priority for action and including work with estates across the whole Park
 - c) Acknowledging more partners as playing a role in delivery of specific actions, alongside the lead partner
 - d) Extending the geographical remit for mountain woodland, mountain hare and moorland management actions beyond the two landscape-scale partnerships of Cairngorms Connect and the East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership; sharing and encouraging uptake of the approaches that will be developed and trialled in the focus areas with land managers across the Park
 - e) Being more explicit about the role land managers play and raising awareness and understanding of the public benefits of all types of land management

- f) Adding a target for a 'measurable and sustained increase' in the home range (re)occupancy and breeding success of the three Annex I raptors: golden eagle, peregrine and hen harrier
 - g) Adding actions to more explicitly work with visitors, residents, land managers and activity providers to address issues around responsible access and sustainable tourism
 - h) Including the ambition to develop baseline data and a suite of indicators to better monitor the biodiversity and overall natural capital of the Park
6. The final draft has been prepared for publication by a graphic designer (Annex I). The final draft design allows for minor changes to be made following any final comments by CNPA Board members before going to print

Recommendation

7. **That the Board approve the final draft of the Cairngorms Nature Action Plan 2019 - 2024.**

Next Steps

8. The Cairngorms Nature Action Plan will be published in both hard copy and on line. It will be formally launched at a Holyrood event in February 2019 (date tbc). Cairngorms Nature partners will promote the Plan and encourage direct participation in delivery through advocacy with land owners, land managers, agencies and individuals involved in conservation in the Park and across Scotland. Cairngorms Nature will continue to promote how the Plan is being delivered by the use of case studies, social media, annual gatherings and a final report as per the previous 2013 – 2018 Plan.

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