

Long Term Monitoring Network for UK Peatlands



WHAT?

Eyes on the Bog is an IUCN UK Peatland Programme initiative which provides scientifically robust, repeatable, affordable and long-term monitoring of peatland health. Once set up, data can be easily and sustainably collected by staff or volunteers.

The standardised methodology enables peatland sites across the UK to be consistently monitored, creating a network of comparable sites and contributing to our understanding of these precious habitats and how to restore them. Eyes on the Bog sites can be recognised by symbolic, totem-like markers locally designed and created to be in keeping with the landscape. These markers can provide quality assurance of the monitoring setup, as well as inspiring and engaging the wider community with peatlands.

WHERE?

Eyes on the Bog sites can include damaged peatlands, peatlands under restoration, or those in good condition. Sites at different condition stages can help us understand how peatlands change along a restoration trajectory from damaged to healthy.

Most Eyes on the Bog methods are suitable for all peatland habitats, including bogs and fens. Rust rods and the von Post soil test are only suitable for bog habitats.

A single Eyes on the Bog station will provide useful information about the health of the peatland at that location, but more stations can provide more insight.

WHY?

Peatland monitoring is happening around the UK but there is a need for a simple, repeatable set of guidelines which set out how to collect basic information across different organisations in the long term. This information can be used to inform management interventions, support ways of financing peatland restoration like the Peatland Code, test long-term climate predictions and inform assumptions about the condition and function of UK peatlands.

To keep Eyes on the Bog running for as long as possible, it uses low-cost equipment and simple data collection techniques to build a long-term dataset of reliable peatland monitoring without damaging the habitat. Creating a network of monitoring stations with easily recognisable, totemic markers highlighting their presence will help raise awareness about what they are and why they are so important.





Example of an installed rust-rod & surface-level marker

WHO?

Existing peatland partnerships and projects are best placed to select local locations, apply for any permissions needed and guide the design of totemic markers. Individuals or independent groups interested in getting involved can search for their local peatland partnership online or contact info@iucn.org.uk.

Eyes on the Bog sites must be set up following the exact methodology described in full in the manual.

A minimum of one of each monitoring tool, with the exception of historic aerial photography, must be used for a site to be officially recognised as an Eyes on the Bog location. If sites are not set up in a standardised way, the data collected will be less reliable and not comparable with other sites. Depending on your objectives, skills and resources, other monitoring methods in addition to Eyes on the Bog will be useful.

HOW?

More information about Eyes on the Bog, including the equipment needed and how to set up a site, is available on the [IUCN UK Peatland Programme website](#). Monitoring your site just once a year or less is enough to provide useful data.

Landowner permission is required to set up Eyes on the Bog sites, protected sites require consent from the relevant statutory agency and planning permission may be needed for totemic markers.

We encourage the use of totemic markers incorporating the Eyes on the Bog logo once necessary permissions are granted. For advice, to register a site as an Eyes on the Bog location, or to request free access to the Eyes on the Bog logo and brand guidelines, please contact info@iucn.org.uk.



**EYES ON
THE BOG**



Peatland Programme

AN ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE...

With the ground rods as a permanent marker use a Smartphone to measure *species of vegetation*

Optional: Virtual Reality camera to measure *surface morphology*

Rust rod to measure *water table behaviour*

Surface-level rod to measure *surface movement: peat accumulation & carbon capture or peat subsidence & carbon loss*

Von Post field test to measure *peat condition*



Optional

Permanent marker (totem) to measure *visual landscape & engage wider community.*

An Eyes on the Bog site must use a minimum of one of the core monitoring tools above. Monitoring frequency: meaningful measurements can be collected by visiting Eyes on the Bog sites once or twice a year or less.

Costs: minimum equipment costs are around £70, including enough Peganox paint for several sites.

For more information or to download the Guidelines:

www.iucn-uk-peatlandprogramme.org/get-involved/eyes-bog