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Peatland Programme

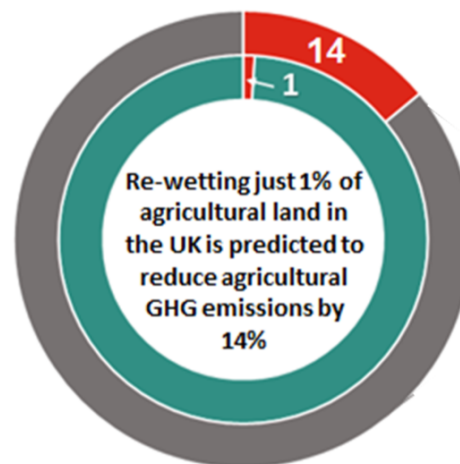


Budget announcements for UK peatland restoration

Peatlands received a welcome funding boost in the UK Budget 2020. In a move to support the Governments commitment to tackling biodiversity and the climate change emergencies with a transition towards Net Zero, peatland restoration has been highlighted as a positive investment. The chancellor Rishi Sunak announced that the Government will “protect, restore and expand” peatbogs and woodlands with a Nature for Climate Fund of £640 million for tree planting and peatland restoration as well as Nature Recovery Network Fund of £25 million to support habitats and species action in nature recovery areas. [Read more...](#)

Peatlands in the UK after Common Agriculture Policy (CAP)

As the UK moves towards post-CAP agricultural policy with the new [Agriculture Bill](#) and development of an [Environmental Land Management Scheme](#) (ELMs) in England and other developing CAP replacements elsewhere in the UK, the recommendations of a new briefing note '[Peatlands in the EU Common Agricultural Policy \(CAP\) after 2020](#)' are a timely reminder of the importance of adapting practices on our agricultural peatlands. The transition of drained peatlands under productive use to wetland agriculture, such as the arable peatlands of the East Anglia Fens, will



Above: % of agricultural land in the UK that needs to be rewet (inner circle) in order to reduce agricultural greenhouse gas emissions (outer circle). Adapted from [Peatlands in the EU Common Agricultural Policy \(CAP\) after 2020](#).

to fully contribute towards the UK's Net Zero ambitions. [Read full article.](#)



Above: *from left to right*: Reed harvesting © Tobias Dahms; Sphagnum farming pilot site © Tobias Dahms; Wetlands Product Foundation – Aldert Typha products.

Wet agriculture - a tool in the climate action toolkit

With the urgent need to reduce our carbon emissions wherever possible, complimenting traditional agriculture on drained peatlands with wet farming techniques could help reduce greenhouse gases emitted from damaged peatlands.

Damaged peatlands are currently responsible for 4% of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions, with drainage based agriculture accounting for 60% of these emissions despite covering just 15% of UK peatland area. However, with peat covering 20% of Scotland's land area and 33% of Britain's fresh vegetables grown in the Fens, the UK cannot afford to cease economic activity on all areas of peat. Adaptive management of these damaged lowland sites, shifting to wet agriculture (also known as Paludiculture from the latin 'palus' meaning swamp and 'cultura' for care, or cultivation), could help reduce UK greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and diversify the future of agriculture. [Read full article.](#)

Peatlands and Trees position paper released

The IUCN UK Peatland Programme have released a position statement and recommendations on peatlands and trees. Native woodlands and peatlands are two of our largest natural climate regulating ecosystems. They are both of high biodiversity importance and are a priority for conservation and restoration in the UK. Both have been subject to centuries of loss and damage, with the result that their characteristic wildlife is much depleted and that their climate regulating function is compromised. In order to meet the urgency and scale of climate

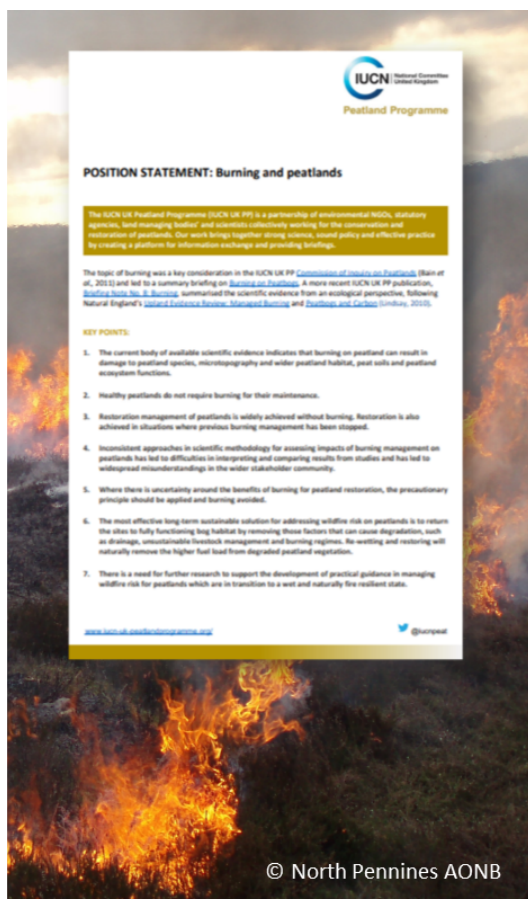
enhancement of both peatlands and woodlands in the UK, without compromising one for the other. [Read full article and position statement.](#)



Burning and peatlands position paper released

The IUCN UK Peatland Programme have updated our [position statement on Burning and Peatlands](#) which sets out the precautionary principle and clearly recommends that burning should not occur on peatlands. This is a view based on the best available evidence. The updated position statement makes several changes and additions to the original statement released in [May 2017](#) and seeks to provide clarity regarding the IUCN UK Peatland Programme's position on both managed burning and addressing wildfire risk.

[Read full article and position statement.](#)



IUCN Resolution 43 progress report

A new report on progress under [IUCN Resolution 43: Securing the future of global peatlands](#) has been released including links to known Peatland Strategies from around the world.

[43, securing the future of global peatlands](#), agreed in 2016 at the World Conservation Congress.

[Read new report and known peatland strategies from around the world...](#)

Partner highlights



Success in Bishopdale

[Yorkshire Peat Partnership](#) is celebrating a remarkably fast turnaround on the Stake Moss restoration site in Bishopdale. Only last winter, the site was a series of bare peat pans linked by dendritic gullies. Restoration works started in spring 2019 and include timber, coir and stone sediment traps and peat bunds – a technique transposed from lowland restoration. The transformation has been remarkable, with huge amounts of sediment trapped in new standing pools that are already being colonised by *Sphagnum cuspidatum* – you can even see it growing up the coir logs. The work is funded by the [EU Life Programme](#) and delivered by [Yorkshire Wildlife Trust](#) for the [Pennine PeatLIFE](#) project.

[Molinia management webinar: watch again](#)

MoorLIFE2020 project on alongside Europarc Atlantic Isles is [now available](#).

Molinia caerulea, also called purple moor grass, covers large areas of deep peat. It can dominate other blanket bog species, lowering the diversity of the bog and reducing its condition status as defined by Natural England. It is important that land managers, conservation organisations, academics and other practitioners work closely together to manage the risk that *Molinia*-domination carries for some of our vitally important blanket bogs.

This webinar gives you the opportunity to learn from farmers, ecologists and conservationists about how we can approach *Molinia* management using the latest research and knowledge from those at the forefront of the debate. [Watch webinar](#).



Yorkshire Intergrated Catchment Solutions Programme update

The [Yorkshire Integrated Catchment Solutions Programme \(iCASP\)](#) is currently working on several peatland projects. One of the projects is looking at developing procedures and protocols to measure peatland condition-related outcomes. The application of these methods will lead to new data and evidence in relation to quantification of ecosystem service delivery from peatlands; this could be used in modelling, for example by DigiBog_Hydro, or as part of the valuation process of ecosystem services.

[iCASP](#) are also carrying out a [survey](#) about their [User Guide for Valuing the Benefits of Peatland Restoration](#) and contacting people who have previously downloaded it to better understand how it is being used, by whom and how it might be improved in future to make it more useful.

Nitrogen Futures: exploring ways of protecting conservation sites from nitrogen pollution.

Around 60% of the UK's nature conservation sites and 17% (42,400 km²) of the UK's total landmass are threatened by damaging levels of excess atmospheric nitrogen.

habitats and species that are vulnerable to increases in atmospheric pollution. The findings of the research, led by the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH), will inform policy development at UK, national and local scale.

[Read press release](#) & [view recent project webinars](#)

Events

IUCN World Conservation Congress, Marseille, France

Rescheduled from June to 7th – 15th January 2021.

[Conference](#) comprised of forum, exhibition & Members' Assembly takes place every 4 years this year focussing on contribution to [post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework](#).

COP 15 - [2020 UN Biodiversity Conference](#), Kunming, China.

Postponed. Dates to be confirmed.

The 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The event will review the progress of [CBD's Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020](#) & aim to determine new global targets on biodiversity; finalising the [post-2020 global biodiversity framework](#). Pre-COP15 events in Edinburgh on 31st March – postponed.

COP26 – [26th United Nations Climate Change Conference](#), Glasgow SEC,

Postponed from 9th – 19th November 2020, date tbc.

Key Conference themes:

- Determine new global targets on climate change: Tackle Climate change & bring about urgent climate action.
- Protect planet for future generations (UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration)
- Transformational change needed to unleash full potential of Paris Agreement

UK (host country): UK Year of Climate Action; UK Pledge to achieve Net Zero by 2050

IUCN UK Peatland Programme Conference

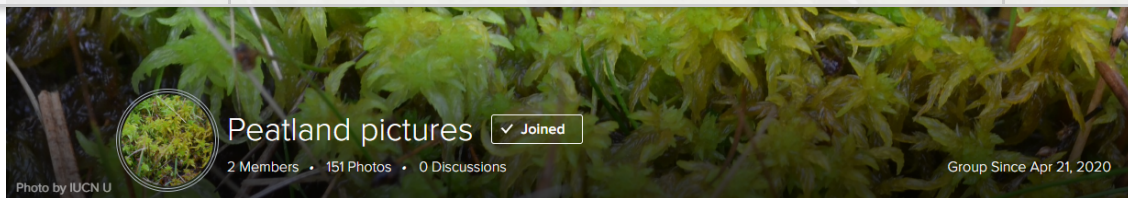
Convening event in Aberystwyth 6th – 8th October 2020 cancelled.

In lieu of our usual 3 day conference this years' annual event will comprise of a series of virtual sessions in a more prolonged programme. Further details to follow.

Other events

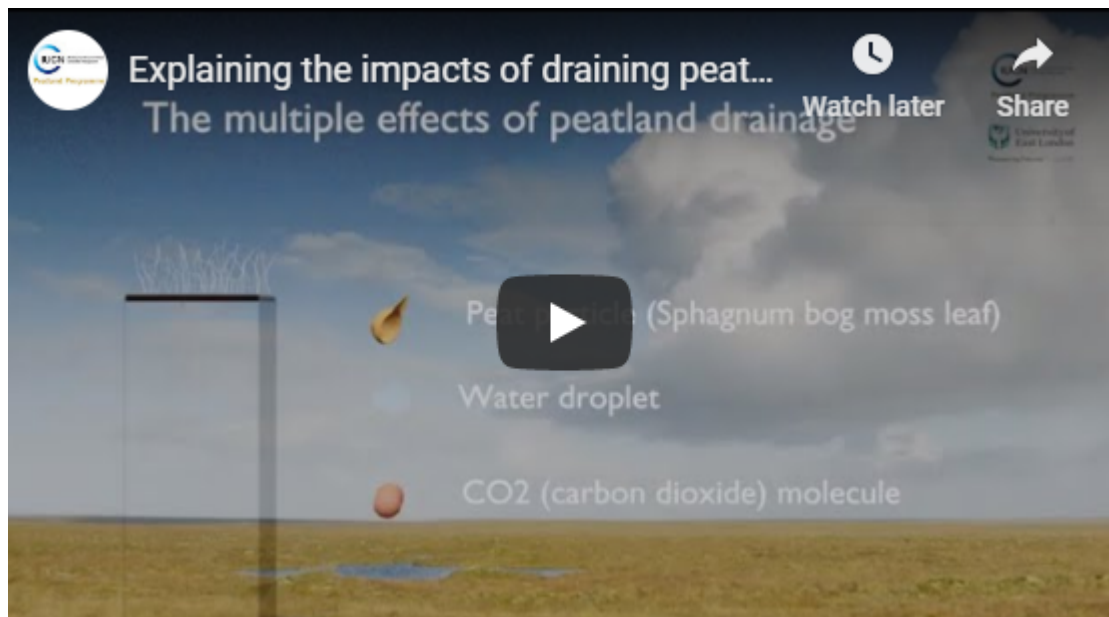
- 4th – 8th May - [European Geosciences Union General Assembly online](#)
 - 26th July – [BogDay](#)
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Resources



New peatland community resource to share images

To help celebrate, communicate and educate about the importance of peatlands IUCN UK Peatland Programme have set up a Flickr group called '[Peatland Pictures](#)' for the peatland community to share images.



Explaining the impact of peatland drainage

A new video explaining the impacts of draining peatland on carbon emissions, hydrology & peat structure is [now available](#).

Carbon emissions from 1 hectare (about the size of a football field) of damaged peatland, where the water table has dropped 50cm below the surface, is between 5 - 15 tonnes of CO2 equivalents per year - the same as the total carbon emissions from between 2 - 7 cars every year. With 3 million hectares of peatland in the UK we must act now to restore and protect them.

The effect of peatland drainage on surface subsidence and carbon loss continues as long as drainage persists. Peatland restoration works, including drain blocking, is needed to halt this loss and restore healthy functioning peatlands.

Measuring ground-level movements (subsidence) as well as the behaviour of the water table is vital to understand the condition of a peatland (see [Eyes on the Bog Initiative](#) for methods of monitoring).

The Roles of Different Sphagnum Species in Bogs – a webinar by Pennine PeatLIFE & Europarc Atlantic Isles.

Sphagnum species that grow in bogs and describe the typical bog conditions that each is found in. Provided by [Pennine PeatLIFE](#). First shown on Tuesday 28th April 2020. [Watch now.](#)

The roles of different *Sphagnum* species in bogs

John O'Reilly

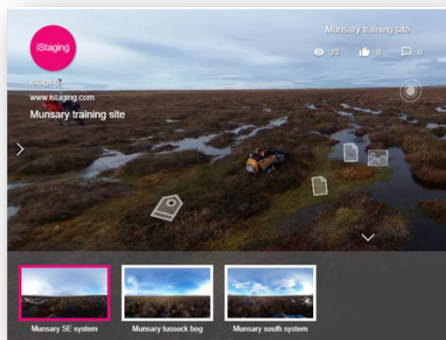


Webinar, April 2020

Pennine Peat LIFE delivery partners



Pennine Peat LIFE is funded by



Bringing peatland sites to you: Virtual Reality provides a useful tool for assessing peatlands.

Virtual Reality (VR) and 3D views can be used to generate useful descriptions of peatland sites. Virtual reality images are being used in combination with 3D views and a site assessment matrix to gain good baseline characterisation of peat bogs. Developed by Richard Lindsay, University of East London, several bogs can now be explored through Virtual Reality - providing not only tool for monitoring but a new way of inspiring people to explore peatlands.

[Instructions to view](#) Esgyrn Bottom, Carmel, Waun Ddu and Rhos Goch part of the LIFE+ New LIFE for Welsh Raised Bogs project; Plantlife's Munsary Peatlands, Caithness and Hard Hill Experimental Plots on Moor House.

5 Things home gardeners can do to address problems with peat

[Listen](#) to the podcast to find out what peat is and why it's used in compost, what the problems are with peat extraction and 5 things that you can do as a home gardener to resolve these problems. [Read full](#)

The episode is written, hosted and produced by [Dr Fay Edwards](#) and features appearances from [Dr Flo Renou-Wilson](#) (research scientist, University College Dublin), Craig Macadam (Conservation Director, [Buglife](#)), Chris Dean (Partnership Manager, [Moors for the Future Partnership](#) and IUCN UK Peatland Programme Steering Group Member) and Jane Barker (Owner, [Dalefoot Composts](#)).

See more information on [peat-free products](#).

Vacancies - research opportunities and jobs

Please contact info@iucn.org.uk if you have a research, volunteer or employment opportunity that you would like to share with the UK peatland community.

Journal & media articles

- Goldstein, A., Turner, W.R., Spawn, S.A. *et al.* Protecting irrecoverable carbon in Earth's ecosystems. *Nat. Clim. Chang.* **10**, 287–295 (2020).
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41558-020-0738-8>
- Ziegler, R. (2020) [Paludiculture as a critical sustainability innovation mission](#). *Research Policy* DOI: 10.1016/j.respol.2020.103979
- [Climate Change increases the risk of wildfires](#). *ScienceBrief* (2020)
- [Graze the Moor Project final report](#), Exmoor National Park. *Food & Farming Futures*. (24/04/2020)
- [Pennine PeatLIFE celebrates a year of achievements](#) *Telegraph & Argus* (22/04/2020)
- BMC Members given opportunity to donate to Peatland restoration with Moors for the Future Partnership [British Mountaineering Council and Climate Change BMC](#) (22/04/2020)
- [Growing special moss to help protect peatland](#) *Northern Echo* (03/03/2020)
- [For Peat's sake: How to protect bogs](#) *Guardian* (08/02/2020)
- [Leaky dams helping to protect thousands of homes and businesses from flooding](#). *West Yorkshire Combined Authority* (2020)
- [Water UK backs call for mandate on firms to restore peat fields on their land](#). *The Water Report* (26/01/2020)
- [European Parliament resolution of 16 January 2020 on the 15th meeting of the Conference of Parties \(COP15\) to the Convention on Biological Diversity](#). *European Parliament Procedure* : [2019/2824\(RSP\)](#). (16/01/2020)
- [Aber and Llanfairfechan graziers supporting work to stop peatland erosion](#). *North Wales Chronicle* (14/01/2020)

Please note: this list is by no means comprehensive, nor are these stories endorsements from the Programme, but for your information only.

The next edition of the Newsletter is due out in August 2020. To submit articles

Privacy policy:

We have recently updated our Privacy Policy, in line with recent changes to data protection. Within the policy, we outline why we capture your personal data, what we use it for, and how we keep it safe, to keep you informed and in control. For further information, please visit our website: www.iucn-uk-peatlandprogramme.org/privacy or telephone us on: 01904 659570.

For information about reports and initiatives referred to in this newsletter please visit: www.iucn-uk-peatlandprogramme.org. You are receiving this newsletter as you signed-up. If you would no longer like to receive these emails, please reply to this email letting us know to unsubscribe you

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