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## News

### IUCN UK Peatland Programme Conference 2020: Registration now open!

*With the growing urgency of the climate and biodiversity emergencies and the role for nature-based solutions in mind this conference will look at taking peatland strategy to action. We will explore the vital role that healthy peatlands play in society's adaptability, resilience and recovery as well as sharing progress made towards UK Peatland Strategy goals.*

Taking place on the **7th - 10th December 2020** this year's IUCN UK Peatland Programme conference 'Peatlands: From Strategy to Action' will be brought to you as a virtual event in partnership with the [Welsh Peatland Sustainable Management Scheme \(SMS\) Project](#).

We are delighted to be able to offer delegates free access to this event. Delegates must register independently as access to the virtual conference venue is non-transferable.

Following last year's fantastic event in Belfast, this year's conference aims to continue to inspire people to connect with each other over peatland topics, creating space to reconnect with existing contacts, grow new networks and exchange knowledge with international peatland projects. [Learn more and register for your free delegate pass...](#)



## Partner Highlights

### ScottishPower Renewables winter 2020-2021 peatland restoration activity

[ScottishPower Renewables](#) started experimenting with forestry to bog restoration methods in 2010 and developed the 'ground smoothing' technique which was tested and validated for large-scale use in 2014. Since then, SPR has completed 1450ha of blanket bog restoration from forestry and an additional 535ha of drain blocking using the 'wave damming' method, also developed on SPR projects by [Strath Caulaidh Ltd](#), across its 9000ha land management area. Long term monitoring of these projects is revealing that recolonisation by specialist bog plants can occur faster than was previously expected – within 3 years in most cases – despite the underlying hydrology still not meeting the same stability of fluctuations during drought conditions as pristine blanket bog reference sites. Much of this work was published in the [IUCN "Peatlands and Forestry"](#) technical report produced as part of the Commission of Inquiry into Peatlands update 2017-2019 process, so is now available to other practitioners working in this area via the IUCN website.

Over the winter 2020-21 period, another 250ha of blanket bog restoration from forestry is being undertaken at Whitelee, Black Law and Mark Hill windfarms as well as another 50ha of drain blocking. These works commenced in September 2020 and aim to be completed by April 2021.



Photograph: © ScottishPower

## Marches Mosses BogLIFE Project sees the return of Snipe

Snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*), are breeding on the Whixall Moss part of [Fenn's, Whixall & Bettisfield Mosses NNR](#), near Whitchurch in North Shropshire following bog restoration work carried out as part of the EU funded [Marches Mosses BogLIFE Project](#). The UK population of snipe has undergone a decline in the last twenty-five years, with very steep declines in lowland wet grassland.

Snipe can be found in various types of wet marshy settings including bogs. They avoid settling in dense vegetation, preferring marshy areas with patchy cover to hide them from predators. Following recent improvements, this makes parts of Whixall Moss the ideal habitat for them. To improve the peatland the natural clay-like property of saturated peat found 0.5-1 metre below ground is being used to rewet the surface using the technique of 'cell bunding' developed in Cumbria, creating a honeycomb pattern of cells 30 m by 30 m using specialist excavators to bring wet impermeable peat to the surface and blocking any drains or cracks. This has proven very effective at 'corralling' the rainfall in small compartments and raising the water table to kick start re-establishment of the healthy bog community.

Leo Smith, organiser of the County-wide Breeding Snipe survey said, "*These 2017-19 records are the first with evidence of breeding Snipe from Whixall Moss since 1995. We only found evidence of 10 breeding pairs in the whole of Shropshire in 2019, so finding them again at Whixall is very welcome. All the records have come from three areas where small embankments have been built to hold the water close to the surface as part of the BogLIFE restoration project. This has caused the creation of shallow pools, ideal Snipe habitat. If these records herald a recolonization of the Mosses by breeding Snipe, this will be a great achievement for the National Nature Reserve and an excellent result for the Marches Mosses BogLIFE Project.*" [Read more...](#)





*Photograph: © Stephen Barlow (Volunteer Warden at Fenn's & Whixall NNR) taken on Sinker's fields from Moss Lane road.*

## Yorkshire Peat Partnership: Peatland Restoration Practitioner training course

Peatland restoration is a burgeoning vocation within the conservation sector, yet there has been no nationally recognised accredited training programme. Developed by [Yorkshire Wildlife Trust](#) in partnership with the [Welsh Peatlands Sustainable Management Scheme \(SMS\) Project](#), the Peatland Restoration Practitioner training course now provides this validation, through LANTRA, with support from the IUCN UK Peatland Programme.

Attendees will gain accreditation in peatland restoration and acquire best practice from practitioners with substantial experience in peatland ecology, management and restoration. The training will be delivered by YPP's Restoration Team including Dr. Tim Thom, Dr. Chris Miller and Ollie Mackrill of [Yorkshire Peat Partnership](#), all experienced trainers. YPP is a landscape scale programme delivering practical peatland restoration, through Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, across Yorkshire for over 10 years. On completion, participants will be able to apply best practice in all aspects of planning, delivering and monitoring peatland restoration. [Read more...](#)





*Photograph: © Matt Snelling*

**Peatland Restoration Officer** Jenny Sharman shares her much anticipated first day out on a [Pennine Peat LIFE](#) project site since lockdown:



## Cairngorms Peatlands flying high

Restoration management is underway again in the [Cairngorms National Park](#), supported by [Peatland ACTION](#), after the delays due to the global pandemic. Work started in June with site



visits to assess work that finished suddenly with the onset of snow last winter. Some days of particularly fine weather involved surveying in shorts & t-shirt high in the mountains while other days were beset by a midge plague!

These early visits identified a number of issues relating to the failure of turf bunding in erosion gullies (the water flow was just too high) or the failure of sphagnum-rich mulch to bare peat (possibly due to some donor sites being too grass dominated). These visits enabled us to modify the work to take place this year to resolve these issues.

The site visits also identified some examples of the sphagnum-rich mulch having rapid vegetation establishment. The photo below is of a bare peat site at 820 metres in [Glenfeshie Estate](#) that had a thick layer of mulch applied in the autumn of 2019. Further work in this site will include the installation of coir logs to slow water flow and the application of lime. While a bare peat area on Balmoral Estate was treated in 2019 with a whole turf technique providing complete vegetation coverage. [Continue reading...](#)



Photographs: © Peatland ACTION

## Pennine PeatLIFE: Eurosite Conference

Pennine PeatLIFE partner organisation [Eurosite](#) will be holding its annual Conference from November 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>. As part of our ongoing collaboration and dissemination with Eurosite, Paul Leadbitter from the [North Pennines AONB Partnership](#) will be chairing the November 4<sup>th</sup> session with a focus on peatlands. The peatland day will focus from the global to local state of peatlands with presentations from Dianna Kopansky, United Nations Environment Programme [Global](#)

[Peatland Initiative](#), Emma Goodyer from the [IUCN UK Peatland Programme](#), Sarah Johnson, Lancashire Wildlife Trust's [Care-Peat](#) Interreg project and Valentina Sechi, from Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences discussing the [Carbon Connects](#) Interreg Project. The peatlands day at the Eurosite Conference demonstrates the importance of peatlands to society and the concerted effort globally to conserve and restore them.

To register for the Conference visit [Eurosite](#).

Photo credit: Clive Hurford

**SAVE THE DATE**

**‘Zooming’ in on European natural site management  
*from plan to action***

Morning sessions | 2-5 November 2020 | 09:30-13:00 CET | open to all

**Eurosite Annual General Meeting:**  
30 October 2020 | Members only

## Resources

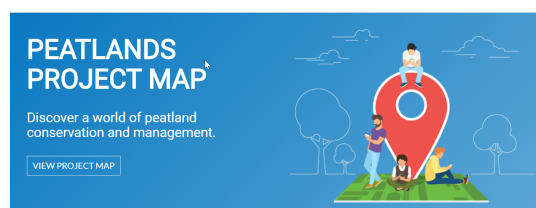
### UN Environment Programme: Wild For Life Journeys - Peatlands

The new [UN Environment Programme Wild For Life](#) campaign explains why peatlands matter for nature and as vital nature based solutions. Discover their [Peatlands Journey](#) and don't forget to add your peatland project to the [Peatland Project Map](#).



### IUCN UK Peatlands Projects Map

Our Projects Map is an active community resource highlighting peatland restoration, management, research, communications and





citizen science projects across the UK and internationally.

[Explore the Projects Map](#) or [add your own peatland project](#)

## #PowerofWetlands

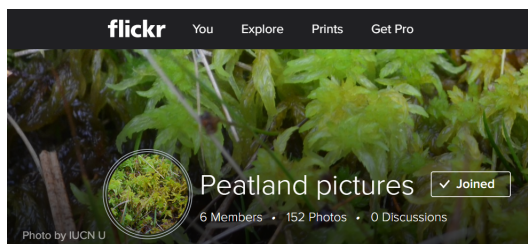
English Fens and Irish peat bogs feature in Wetlands International's new campaign #PowerofWetlands – a tool to help make wetland conservation and restoration a national and global priority.



[Discover some of the world's largest, most vulnerable and critical wetlands, and add your stories of hope and action to show what's possible.](#)

## 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.



[Learn more and submit your photos](#)

## EUROPARC Atlantic Isles webinar: IUCN UK Peatland Programme - Peatland Code overview

In collaboration with [EUROPARC Atlantic Isles](#) Clifton Bain of the IUCN UK Peatland Programme provides overview of the [Peatland Code](#) - an innovative funding mechanism for peatland restoration. The Peatland Code is part of the new toolkit to help businesses invest in natural solutions to the environmental crises of climate change and biodiversity, helping the UK's green recovery.



[Learn more and watch the webinar](#)

## NEW video explaining the effects of fire on blanket bog now available

**Burning on Blanket Bogs: Part 1 - Effects of fire** is based on evidence from experimental plots at Hard Hill (Moorhouse, northern England) and other sites subject to burning.



[Learn more and watch the animation](#)

## The Nitrogen Futures Project

Nitrogen Futures provides new evidence to support strategic local actions to reduce air pollution and protect the UK's nature conservation sites. Researchers quantified the effects of introducing targeted mitigation measures near nature conservation sites to maximise benefits to ecosystems.



[The final reports are now available online](#)

## iCASP: Deliberative monetary valuation protocol resources

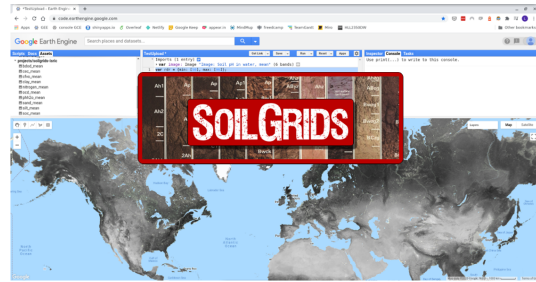
The **Deliberative Monetary Valuation** method (DMV) is one type of environmental valuation technique that allows valuation of the benefits that ecosystems provide to humans. This protocol sets out key steps for conducting the DMV method as well as important considerations of its application. It is particularly aimed at non-academics – environmental practitioners especially – interested in independently valuing and/or discussing values of ecosystem services. The protocol uses peatland restoration as an example, but it is applicable to any kind of ecosystem.



[Download the protocol](#)

## SoilGrids data now available on Google Earth Engine

[SoilGrids](#) is a project of [ISRIC](#) – World Soil Information which aims to provide a globally consistent, data-driven system that predicts soil properties and classes using global covariates and globally fitted models with a digital soil mapping approach based on Quantile Random Forest. The addition of the dataset to Google Earth Engine aims to make the information as easy to use and as widely available as possible.



[Explore via Google Earth Engine](#)

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## Other News

### How Abbeyleix raised its bog standards to the highest level

The flood of well-founded bad news about the climate and biodiversity crises can be overwhelming. So it is invigorating to find islands of ecological restoration, where this deluge has not only been halted, but reversed.

Even small examples like the [Abbeyleix Bog Project](#), can offer valuable lessons for progress on a larger scale, not least in its exemplary monitoring of its outcomes by scientists and the local community.

And the latest survey on the state of this bog, just completed by ecologists [Fernando Fernandez](#) and [Willie Crowley](#), reveals some remarkable findings. [Read the full article...](#)





Photograph: © [Tina Claffey](#)

## Mendip moves to protect precious Levels and Moors

[Mendip District Council](#) is taking measures to protect the [Somerset Levels and Moors](#) when determining planning applications.

The move follows guidance given to Somerset local authorities by [Natural England](#), concerning the high levels of phosphates in the Somerset Levels and Moor. The organisation stresses the need to protect them from further phosphate pollution.

Natural England state that in light of the unfavourable condition of the Somerset Levels and Moors, authorities should undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) before determining planning applications that may give rise to additional phosphates within the catchment. (This guidance follows a court judgement affecting International Wildlife sites known as 'Dutch N'). [Continue reading...](#)



Photograph: © Mendip District Council Website

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## Events

Visit the [IUCN UK Peatland Programme website](#) for upcoming events.

**Eurosite Annual Meeting 2020:** [‘Zooming’ in on European natural site management — from plan](#)

[to action](#)

*2nd - 5th November 2020*

Eurosite members can join them online for their Annual General Meeting to learn more about practical nature site management in Europe. After the conference, participants will leave with concrete tips, tricks and tools to take home to their natural sites.

**Wet Futures:** [#wetlandheritagechat on Caring for Wetlands and their Cultural Heritage](#)

*11th November 2020 12pm - 1pm BST*

Join us on twitter on the 11th November for the next #WetlandHeritageChat exploring caring for wetlands and their cultural heritage.

**IUCN UK Peatland Programme:** [Conference 2020](#)

*7th - 10th December 2020*

Our 10th Annual Conference: From Strategy to Action will focus on adaptability, resilience and recovery featuring speakers, workshops and the opportunity for virtual networking. [Registration is now open.](#)

**British Ecological Society:** [Festival of Ecology](#)

*14th - 18th December 2020*

Join us in December as the largest and most welcoming ecology conference in Europe – the British Ecological Society's Annual Meeting – moves online this year. There will also be a thematic session dedicated to peatlands, exploring their climatic, ecological and societal importance, with research being showcased from the swamps of Peru to the bogs of Scotland. Please do make any edits.

**IUCN World Conservation Congress**, Marseille, France

*The date has rescheduled and will be announced in due course*

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

**MoorWissen: Virtual conference week** - [RRR2021](#)

*9th - 11th March 2021*

The first two RRR conferences on the utilisation of wetland plants ([paludiculture](#)) were held in 2013 and 2017 in Greifswald. The Greifswald Mire Centre warmly invites you to continue this dialogue and to use the 3rd RRR conference as a platform for exchange.

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

*17th - 30th May 2021*

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](#).

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

1st - 12th November 2021

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

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## Vacancies & Opportunities

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

### Cairngorms National Park: Peatland Action Project Officer

Would you like to work in the Cairngorms National Park and help deliver landscape scale restoration? We are recruiting a Peatland ACTION Project Officer to join our expanding team in the Park Authority.



[Learn more details and apply by Tuesday  
10th October 2020](#)

### Moors for the Future: Project Managers

The [Moors for the Future Partnership](#) are seeking to recruit experienced Project Managers. You will contribute to the delivery of a programme that aims to protect internationally important moorlands across the [South Pennines Special Area of Conservation](#).



[Find out more and apply by 9th November  
2020](#)

### Food and Agriculture Organization of the United



## Nations: Director, Land and Water Division (NSL)



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

The Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations is recruiting a new Director for its Land and Water Division. The NSL Director is responsible for the effective planning, development and implementation of FAO's programme and policies in the field of sustainable management, use and conservation of natural resources, in particular on land, soils and water resources for food and agriculture. [Apply via the FAO website.](#)

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## Research Publications

- Gunther, A., Barthelmes, A., Huth, V., Joosten, H., Jurasinski, G., Koebisch, F., Couwenberg, J. (2020) Prompt rewetting of drained peatlands reduces climate warming despite methane emissions. *Nature Communications* <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-020-15499-z>
- Emsens, W. J., Diggelen, R. V., Aggenbach, C. J. S., Cajthaml, T., Frouz, J., Klimkowska, A., Kotowski, W., Kozub, L., Liczner, Y., Seeber, E., Silvennoinen, H., Tanneberger, F., Vicena, J., Wilk, M., Verbruggen, E. (2020) Recovery of fen peatland microbiomes and predicted functional profiles after rewetting. *The ISME Journal* **14** 1701 – 1712  
<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41396-020-0639-x>
- Tanneberger, F., Schröder, C., Hohlbein, M., Lenschow, U., Permien, T., Wichmann, S., Wichtmann, W. (2020) Climate Change Mitigation through Land Use on Rewetted Peatlands – Cross-Sectoral Spatial Planning for Paludiculture in Northeast Germany. *Wetlands*  
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13157-020-01310-8>
- Strassburg, B. B., Itibarrem, A., Visconti, P. (2020) Global priority areas for ecosystem restoration. *Nature* <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-020-2784-9>
- Hugelius, G., Loisel, J., Chadburn, S., Jackson, R. B., Jones, M., MacDonald, G., Marushchak, M., Olefeldt, D., Packalen, M., Siewert, M. B., Treat, C., Turetsky, M., Voigt, C., Yu, Z. (2020) Large stocks of peatland carbon and nitrogen are vulnerable to permafrost thaw. *PNAS* **117**  
<https://www.pnas.org/content/117/34/20438>
- Boothroyd, R. J., Warburton, J. (2020) Spatial organisation and physical characteristics of large peat blocks in an upland fluvial peatland ecosystem.  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0169555X20303706?via%3Dihub>

**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 January 2021. To submit**

**articles please email:** [info@iucn.org.uk](mailto:info@iucn.org.uk)

**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](http://www.iucn-uk-peatlandprogramme.org/privacy), or telephone us on: 01904 659570.

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