



# Our policy on Biodiversity

The UK's wildlife is in danger. One in 10 wildlife species faces extinction and habitat loss, with agriculture, climate change and urbanisation all being named as reasons for the decline.

We recognise that our water and wastewater services are closely linked with the natural world and we therefore have a role to support this environment, as nature underpins all aspects of our economy, society and wellbeing.

We understand that ecosystems with high biodiversity value are more productive and resilient to impacts such as climate change, flooding and drought. We are committed to increasing biodiversity value and recognise our reliance on the natural environment to deliver our core services.

All employees share responsibility for protecting and enhancing our natural environment.

**Ian McAulay**  
Chief Executive Officer

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## Our commitment during this Asset Management Period (AMP) 2020–25:

Customers and stakeholders expect us to protect and enhance the natural environment. This is reflected in our core biodiversity duties that form part of our water and wastewater environment programme. This programme will contribute to the Government's 25 year Environment Plan.

### What we are doing:

- Biodiversity is a key aspect of our Environmental Management System (EMS). It is accredited by the international EMS standard called ISO 14001 and it is annually reviewed to allow opportunities for improvement to be identified.
- Southern Water and other English water companies have [signed up](#) to the protection of chalk streams to stop their decline, as well as to restore their health and ecological status.
- Rebalancing the natural ecosystems by implementing changes in our wastewater assets, e.g. removing phosphates during wastewater recycling to prevent excessive plant growth in our watercourses.
- As Southern Water is a major landowner with many designated land parcels, e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), we are responsible for and committed to maintaining and enhancing these to improve their designated status. We also monitor, control and, where possible, eradicate invasive non-native species on our sites.
- We are underpinning our environmental ambition by embedding natural capital and the value of nature into our investment decision making to ensure we are making best value decisions.

### What we will do:

- Seek to increase carbon stocks and sequestration in a way that supports biodiversity, in order to support our goal to reach operational net zero carbon by 2030.
- Understand the natural capital value of our own estate. This will help to ensure we are protecting and managing our best wildlife areas as well as delivering best value in terms of carbon sequestration and wider environmental gains.
- Produce a company position statement on biodiversity net gain (BNG) and environmental net gain (ENG) in response to the forthcoming Environment Bill which will make these legal obligations.
- Develop measurable performance targets and report progress to ensure continuous improvement.
- Seek to reduce waste by re-using materials to create biodiversity enhancements.
- Undertake structured stakeholder engagement with regulators, local government bodies, non-government organisations (NGOs) and local volunteers to support and lead on biodiversity initiatives.
- Deliver assets that maintain resilient/sustainable environmental performance, ensuring application of the mitigation hierarchy tool which aims to avoid, mitigate or compensate for biodiversity losses. Wherever possible, we will improve the natural habitat and ecological features of the area affected by development.