

[Ambitious new route map points the way to £1 billion for nature conservation](#)

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A route map towards unlocking £1 billion of new investment for nature conservation in Scotland has been published by the Scottish Wildlife Trust and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). This work comes at a critical time as society plans a green recovery from the social and economic upheaval caused by COVID-19, and continues to respond to the urgent climate and ecological emergencies.

The route map, which was developed in collaboration with a broad coalition of stakeholders and experts over a period of two years, highlights nine tangible opportunities for investment that would contribute to a green recovery and result in significant benefits for nature, people's health and wellbeing, and the nation's economy. Crucially, the route map also includes models which aim to stimulate investment in Scotland's natural capital by delivering a financial return to investors.

Attracting new investment into nature through innovative approaches to tried and tested mechanisms would also help Scotland to meet its commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals, and help bridge a gap between the resources needed to tackle urgent challenges facing nature and the funding available from traditional sources (1).

Terry A'Hearn, Chief Executive of SEPA, said:

"The global healthcare pandemic has drawn into sharp focus the connection between social, environmental and economic prosperity. We're already seeing communities and companies rising to the challenge – from innovation like manufacturers switching production to health equipment to investors looking towards more sustainable business models.

"As we start to focus on recovery we must recognise the opportunity for that to be more inclusive and more sustainable. The £1 Billion Challenge provides a real opportunity to bring together real-world projects that spark regeneration of communities, build green businesses and create new jobs, with investors that understand that a successful, resilient economy depends not just on achieving financial returns – but on creating social and environmental value and success.

"Scotland needs a globally competitive, entrepreneurial, inclusive and sustainable economy. At SEPA our One Planet Prosperity strategy will mean we can regulate in a radically new way – helping businesses bring commercial and environmental success together as the joint engine rooms of economic and social prosperity. SEPA is proud to be working with the Scottish Wildlife Trust and other partners on this innovative and progressive initiative to help support economic recovery, with benefits for Scotland's people and

environment.”

Jo Pike, Chief Executive, Scottish Wildlife Trust said:

“The urgent challenges facing nature have been brought into sharp focus by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many people have been reminded of the importance of having high quality and connected green spaces close to home during lockdown, and there is growing support for ensuring that the recovery from this crisis comes in harmony with the natural environment.

“It is increasingly clear that solving these challenges will only be possible if we can develop new and innovative funding mechanisms that help us take solutions to scale. Our route map aims to identify ways to generate greater investment in nature conservation, whilst also creating green jobs, more resilient communities and helping to fight climate change. We hope it will stimulate further discussion about how these new models can be at the heart of a green recovery.”

The route map is the culmination of the Scottish Conversation Finance Project’s £1 Billion Challenge. It has been developed with the support of a wide range of private, public and third sector organisations (“Scottish Conservation Finance Pioneers”), including Conservation Capital, Scottish Natural Heritage, Central Scotland Green Network Trust and many more.

The nine opportunities outlined include a Natural Capital Pioneer Fund, a Marine Fund, and a first-of-its-kind Nature-Climate Bond.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

(1) A 2016 report by Credit Suisse AG and the McKinsey Center for Business and Environment found an estimated USD\$300 – \$400 billion per year is needed globally, to preserve healthy ecosystems. Currently only around \$52 billion is available per year, mostly in the form of public and philanthropic funds.

About the Scottish Wildlife Trust:

- The Scottish Wildlife Trust is Scotland’s leading nature conservation charity, representing over 40,000 members who care for wildlife and the natural environment.
- For over 50 years, the Trust has worked with its members, partners and supporters in pursuit of its vision of healthy, resilient ecosystems across Scotland’s land and seas.
- The Trust successfully champions the cause of wildlife through policy and campaigning work, demonstrates best practice through practical conservation and innovative partnerships, and inspires people to take positive action through its education and engagement activities.
- The Trust manages a network of around 120 wildlife reserves across Scotland and is a member of the UK-wide Wildlife Trusts movement.
- The Trust receives financial assistance and support from a range of organisations, funders and individuals including Scottish Natural Heritage and players of People’s Postcode Lottery.