

# [New geospatial data projects to shape the future of land use](#)

The Geospatial Commission has launched a series of projects to explore key land use pressures, such as energy, housing and decarbonisation, and how innovative data analysis can support better decisions about land use change.

Through the National Land Data Programme, the Geospatial Commission is convening regional pilots, national roundtables and expert workshops to bring together stakeholders across local and national government, academia and industry.

## **Land is a finite resource**

Land faces increasing demands from a wide range of economic and environmental objectives, including housing, transport, energy, food production, flood protection, water security and decarbonisation. The scale of land use change required to meet these demands is significant. Taking just one element, it is estimated by the [Climate Change Committee](#) that 9% of UK agricultural land will need to be released for actions to reduce emissions and sequester carbon by 2035 – an area the size of Wales.

To ensure the UK can meet challenging net zero and biodiversity targets while also delivering infrastructure and economic growth, measures to manage tradeoffs and increase the sustainable productivity of land are required. Recognising this, the government has announced that a [land use framework for England](#) will be published in 2023.

## **National Land Data Programme**

Recent advances in spatial data science and the availability of new forms of data offer huge potential to underpin spatially targeted land use strategies. By combining data about current land use and constraints with satellite observations and remote sensing technology, it is possible to identify multifunctional land management opportunities, or model the future impact of different land use choices.

The Geospatial Commission's National Land Data Programme will demonstrate how spatial data can inform land use scenario planning. Through regional pilots and in dialogue with land use stakeholders, the programme will explore selected use cases and develop a blueprint of capability improvements to support land use decision making.

## **Land Use Dialogues**

At a national level, the Land Use Dialogues, a series of focussed roundtables and technical workshops, will bring together land use decision makers with modelling practitioners from government, academia and industry around core policy challenges.

The events will aim to explore how better use of spatial data and modelling tools could support strategic, joined-up decisions about some of the UK's most pressing land use challenges.

The policy priorities and issues surfaced at each roundtable will feed into a workshop

involving experts from academia and industry, analysts and officials. This will focus on the data and modelling tools that could help support decisions on how best to balance the land required for the UK's policy priorities.

The first roundtable, held on 1 November 2022, discussed options for the UK's long term energy security. Subsequent roundtables will look at other issues such as housing, infrastructure and the environment.

### **Regional pilots**

We are working with regional partners to develop an understanding of how spatial data can inform local and regional land use strategy.

In Devon and Cambridgeshire, we are working with the Food, Farming and Countryside Commission and the British Geological Survey to support the design and development of a local land use framework. We are investing in the design and prototyping of a spatial modelling decision support tool to help articulate the impacts of different land use change scenarios to local stakeholders. By improving how spatial data can be made accessible and visualised, local decision makers can more confidently appraise their land use choices.

In Northern Ireland, we are working with Ordnance Survey Northern Ireland to produce an authoritative land cover and land use map of Derry and Strabane District Council, which uses earth observation data to infill classification gaps. By improving our understanding of existing land use, we can make more informed decisions on how to better optimise land.

You can find out more information on the [land use dialogues website](#) or please get in touch with us via [NLDP@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:NLDP@cabinetoffice.gov.uk)

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## **106 increased sentences under the Unduly Lenient Scheme in 2021**

News story

The Attorney General's Office has published the annual Unduly Lenient Sentence (ULS) statistics for 2021



[New statistics for 2021](#) show that 106 offenders had their sentences increased after HM Law Officers challenged their sentences because they thought they were too low.

Under the Unduly Lenient Sentence (ULS) scheme, victims of crime, members of the public, and the Crown Prosecution Service can ask for certain Crown Court sentences to be reviewed if they believe they are too low.

In 2021, the Law Officers received applications for 678 sentences to be reviewed which met the necessary criteria to be considered under the Scheme. Of these, 151 were referred to the Court of Appeal. The Court agreed that 106 of these sentences were too low and increased the sentences as a result.

Other offenders who received increased sentences referred under the ULS scheme in 2021 include Frankie Smith for her role in the death of one-year-old Star Hobson, Ben John for domestic terrorism offences and Thomas Hughes for taking part in the abuse that led to the death of his son, six-year-old Arthur Labinjo-Hughes.

Commenting on the Scheme's performance, Rt Hon Attorney General Victoria Prentis MP said:

The ULS scheme allows anyone, including victims of crime, to ask for a review of certain sentences they believe are too low. In 2021, this meant that over 100 criminals had their sentences increased and many more victims and their families had a second chance at justice, demonstrating the vital role of the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme in the criminal justice system.

It must be remembered that in the vast majority of cases the correct sentence is imposed, but the scheme remains an important tool to ensure that cases can be reviewed where there may have been a gross error in the sentencing decision. It's not just about increasing sentences, the scheme also provides an important avenue for the Attorney General's Office to ask the Court of Appeal for guidance, to help shape the sentencing framework and ensure more consistent sentencing for complex cases.

## Notes and further information on the ULS scheme

- The ULS scheme came into force on 1st February 1989. It was introduced after public outcry over the lenient sentencing of the offenders involved in the 1986 rape of a 21-year-old. The victim was brutally raped by a gang of burglars at her father's vicarage.
- The first ever ULS hearing took place in July 1989 for a man who committed incest on his daughter and had his sentence doubled from 3 to 6 years.
- The scheme was extended in 2017 to include an additional 19 terror-related offences, and again in 2019 to cover more sexual offences as well as coercive control and stalking and harassment involving violence.
- Only one referral is required in order for it to be considered by the Attorney General's Office.
- More information on the ULS scheme, including how to refer a sentence and the types of offences covered can be found on [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk). ULS statistics can be found [here](#). Under the ULS scheme a case must be referred to the Court of Appeal within 28 days of the date of sentencing. The referral must be lodged with the Court no later than 5pm on the last business day of the 28 days. This deadline cannot be extended and in order to ensure we have time to properly consider a case we ask that referrals are made early in the process. It is very difficult to consider a case which is submitted late and it is not possible to do so outside of working hours.
- Of the 151 offenders who were referred to the Court of Appeal in 2021, these related to crimes in the following categories:
  - Child sex offences
  - Aggravated Burglary
  - Causing death by dangerous driving
  - Causing grievous bodily harm with intent
  - Distributing indecent images of children
  - Possession with intent to supply Class A drugs
  - Manslaughter
  - Murder
  - Rape
  - Robbery
  - Stalking
  - Wounding with intent

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## [Prime Minister to call for shared focus at British-Irish Council summit](#)

The Prime Minister will today (Thursday 10 November) attend the opening of the British-Irish Council summit, the first Prime Minister to do so since

2007.

He will join representatives from the Irish Government, UK Government, Devolved Governments and Crown Dependencies at the 38th summit in the North West of England.

Ahead of the summit, the Prime Minister will have a bilateral with the Taoiseach Micheál Martin, and is also expected to meet with First Minister of Scotland Nicola Sturgeon and First Minister of Wales Mark Drakeford. This follows initial phone calls with the leaders immediately after taking office.

In the margins, the Prime Minister will also host his first Prime Minister and Heads of Devolved Governments Council to update on work ahead of the Autumn statement and stress the need for a collective effort to provide long-term economic stability. The Chancellor Jeremy Hunt will join discussions virtually.

Opening the summit, the Prime Minister will call on all representatives to focus on tackling shared issues through closer collaboration.

He is expected to say:

We face huge challenges from global economic headwinds to war in Europe.

So let's be pragmatic. Let's work together in our shared interests.

Let's deliver for all our people across these great islands – and build a future defined not by division, but by unity and hope.

The Prime Minister's attendance at the summit follows the announcement by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland earlier this week that the Government will be introducing legislation to provide a short extension to the period for Executive formation. This comes after extensive engagement with Parties, businesses, community representatives and members of the public in Northern Ireland.

Noting the disappointing absence of representation from Northern Ireland at the summit due to the collapse of the Executive, the Prime Minister will highlight the important role of the British-Irish Council in finding resolutions.

The Prime Minister will reiterate his commitment to restoring the Northern Ireland Executive, and is expected to say:

The British-Irish Council is a vital East-West body under the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, an agreement that I am deeply committed to.

We all want to see power sharing restored as soon as possible.

I'm determined to deliver that.

The British-Irish Council comprises of representatives from the UK Government; Irish Government; Scottish Government; Northern Ireland Executive; Welsh Government; Isle of Man Government; Government of Jersey and Government of Guernsey.

Established under the Belfast (Good Friday) agreement, the Council's aims are to promote positive, relationships among the people of the islands.

The Prime Minister will open the summit, hosted by the UK government in the North West, and attend a dinner with representatives.

Levelling up Secretary and Minister for Intergovernmental relations Michael Gove will represent the UK government at the summit's plenary session on Friday 11th November.

Minister for Intergovernmental Relations Michael Gove said:

The Prime Minister's attendance at the British-Irish Council is a signal of our intent to work positively with our Irish counterparts and colleagues from the Devolved Governments and Crown Dependencies across the UK.

As the Minister for Intergovernmental Relations, I look forward to chairing the Council this week and working cooperatively in the months ahead as we face up to many shared challenges.

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## **Colombia receives support from Germany, Norway and the UK for implementing their ambitious plan to contain deforestation in the Colombian Amazon**

- Colombia's government has launched an emergency plan to stop deforestation in the Colombian Amazon. The ambitious strategy consists of working with local communities and indigenous people in 22 deforestation hotspots, reaching agreements to strengthen economic, social and environmental conditions in these areas
- within 100 days of starting office, Colombia's Minister of Environment Susana Muhamad already signed the first agreements with communities to

reduce deforestation in Caquetá, the country's second most deforested state in 2021

- international partners praise the ambitious plan, and Norway and Germany will contribute 25 million USD under the Joint Declaration of Intent
- the sustainable use and conservation of the Amazon, the world's largest rainforest, is considered vital to curbing catastrophic climate change and to save unique biodiversity

Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, 7 November 2022. Colombia has the third biggest forest area in South America and is known to have one of the most biodiverse forests in the world. In face of rising deforestation in the Colombian Amazon in first quarter of 2022, Colombia's government has launched an ambitious emergency plan to stop deforestation in the Amazon.

The Colombian Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development, Susana Muhamad, said:

Colombia is committed to the development of a solid forestry economy that contributes to the goals of zero net emissions, the guarantee and protection of the applicable rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, as well as the expansion of efforts to conserve and manage sustainably natural forests.

The advances in social agreements with the communities of the areas with the greatest impact of deforestation are highlighted, with the aim of promoting sustainable forest management of natural forests, the ecological restoration of degraded areas and the sustainable use of biodiversity.

The plan consists of focusing efforts in 22 deforestation hotspots in the Colombian Amazon and seeks to effectively reduce deforestation in the region where more than 50% of the deforestation of the Amazon is concentrated.

Through social dialogue with communities, the Colombian government aims to reach agreements to strengthen the economic, social, and environmental conditions in these areas. Within 100 days after taking office, Minister of Environment Muhamad already signed the first agreements with communities to reduce deforestation. The agreements are part of a wider strategy to develop a National Fund to mobilize finance from national and international sources, promote a Forest Economy, improve sustainable livelihoods, and stop the expansion of the agricultural frontier.

Espen Barth Eide, Minister of Climate and Environment, Norway, said:

I am impressed by Colombia's ambitious emergency plan to stop deforestation in the Amazon. Such strong political will to protect the Amazon is essential if we are to reach the global climate goals and protect biodiversity, as well as total peace in Colombia. Norway remains a committed partner to Colombia in this effort.

Norway, Germany and the United Kingdom stressed their commitment to support the impressive ambitions of Colombia's government in conserving fragile ecosystems such as the Amazon rainforest, whilst also protecting local environmental and human rights leaders and safeguarding the rights and safety of indigenous peoples, campesinos and afro-Colombian communities. Based on Colombia's achievements under the Joint Declaration of Intent, signed during COP25, Norway and Germany announced a donation of USD 25 million in support of Colombia's plan against deforestation.

Lord Goldsmith, Minister of State for Climate and Environment at the United Kingdom Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office, said:

We want to speed up and grow international support for committed and ambitious forest countries like Colombia, to spur even greater action at both the jurisdictional and national level. Regulating voluntary carbon markets is essential for raising the finance we need to meet our climate, nature, and development goals throughout this decade. But those markets must be high integrity from beginning to end, and we are determined to involve rural and forest communities across the board to ensure they benefit from the natural resource they protect.

Jochen Flasbarth, German State Secretary in the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, said:

We will keep supporting efforts to reduce deforestation in the future. We have to ensure that our common approach evolves and meets the challenges of the climate and biodiversity crisis. We will continue our engagement in the coming years to work towards these goals together with Colombia, Norway and the UK. It is an investment in our common future.

The [Joint Declaration of Intent \(JDI\) between Colombia, Germany, Norway and the United Kingdom](#) is a cooperative partnership and an example of international collaboration, coordination and articulation to meet the climate goals set out in the Paris Agreement. Thus far, 194 parties have signed. The JDI utilizes results-based payments for the achievement of policy goals and emission reductions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) in Colombia.

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View the [Joint Declaration of Intent between Colombia, Germany, Norway and UK](#), signed on 11 December 2019.

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## **The UK remains committed to working with the Prosecutor's Office and the Libyan authorities**

Thank you Madam President. I would like to start by thanking the Prosecutor Khan for his 24th Report and for briefing us today on the work of the Office.

I am pleased to note the Office of the Prosecutor has accelerated its investigative and cooperation activities under the renewed strategy outlined in the previous report. We welcome the tangible progress of the Office on the four key lines of inquiry: 2011 violence, crimes in detention centres, crimes in the 2014–2020 operations, and crimes against migrants.

The constant presence of the Office in the region throughout the reporting period has strengthened their ability to engage with witnesses and victims, thereby deepening their knowledge and understanding of the challenges to achieving accountability. We welcome the additional resources allocated to the Libya investigation team, in particular through experts and Arabic speakers.

The report also highlights the increased support received from the Libyan authorities, including from the Office of the President of the Presidential Council of Libya ahead of the Prosecutor's visit to Tripoli at present. We encourage the Libyan authorities to build on this and to take the key steps outlined in the report to increase further cooperation. A collective approach and engagement between all relevant actors is needed to uphold the rights of those who still wait to receive justice.

We welcome the formal membership of the Office of the Prosecutor into the Joint Investigation Team in relation to crimes against migrants with the authorities of Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the UK alongside Europol. Their assistance with the investigation of two key suspects of crimes against victims of human trafficking and smuggling led to their arrest and extradition, which is a significant step towards justice for those victims.

However, we note the difficult context in which these results were achieved: a complex political landscape with the ongoing executive impasse and division. These heighten the continued risk of violence. In this respect, the UK was pleased to see the appointment of the new Special Representative,

Abdoulaye Bathily, and a substantial 12 month renewal of the UNSMIL mandate. UN leadership is vital to restoring Libya's electoral footing, following the failed presidential elections of December 2021. The interim Government of National Unity is charged with making the necessary preparations for making free, fair, and inclusive elections, and it must fulfil its obligations to do so.

In conclusion Madam President, I underline that the UK remains committed to working with the Prosecutor's Office and the Libyan authorities, and urge them to build on the momentum that we've heard of today and accelerate progress towards justice for the victims.