

IUCN Protected Area Management Categories Statement of Compliance for the UK National Park Authorities on why they should continue to be recognised as IUCN Protected Areas Cat V

1. Introduction

1.1 Statements of Compliance are an innovation of the IUCN National Committee for the United Kingdom's ***Putting Nature on the Map*** project. The project has developed guidance, within a UK context, on the use of the IUCN definition of a 'protected area' and the assignment of the associated management categories and governance types¹. The guidance suggests that short but authoritative Statements of Compliance are produced for a conservation site or group of sites.

1.2 For groups of sites designated for conservation under one overriding piece of legislation or public policy, the statements should concentrate on whether the sites meet the IUCN definition of a protected area. For statutory designations, the Statements of Compliance should review all relevant legislation, focussing on the priority given to nature conservation in the long-term. For sites not covered by legislation, the statements should review the significance for nature conservation of all relevant public policy positions that specifically affect the area or areas.

1.3 Statements should also provide an overview of current management objectives, in particular in relation to prioritising nature conservation, and summarise examples of current management practice that demonstrate the priority given to nature conservation, and the ambition and vision for nature conservation in the future. In addition to reviewing legislation or policy in relation to the IUCN definition of a protected area, Statements of Compliance can also assign sites to IUCN management categories and governance type. Where this is done, supporting evidence should be provided.

1.4 The Statement of Compliance below sets out how the National Parks of the UK meet the requirements of the IUCN for qualifying as Protected Areas and has been prepared with full reference to the 2008 Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories (see footnote for details), and Handbook.

2. A critical review of the legislation affecting National Parks, especially on the priority given to nature conservation in the long term

2.1 The main pieces of legislation affecting National Parks in the UK are the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, the 1988 Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act and the 2000 National Parks (Scotland) Act. These specify the statutory purposes for the National Parks and The Broads, as well as subsidiary and related duties.

2.2 Taking the 1949 Act first, which applies to National Parks in England and Wales (other than The Broads, see below), the purposes were amended in 1995 by the Environment Act and are to:

- Conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area
- Promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of the area's special qualities

¹ Dudley, N (Editor) (2008) Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. X + 86pp. <http://data.iucn.org/dbtw-wpd/edocs/PAPS-016.pdf>
AND

IUCN NCUK (2012); *Putting nature on the map - identifying protected areas in the UK: A handbook to help identify protected areas in the UK and assign the IUCN management categories and governance types to them*, IUCN National Committee for the United Kingdom, UK <http://www.iucn-uk.org/Portals/0/PNOTM%20Final%20January.pdf>

2.3 The statutory definition of natural beauty (above) includes geomorphology and landform, concepts that are embraced by IUCN in its definition of “nature”². This is, therefore, a wider definition than those normally subsumed under the term “wildlife”.

2.4 The two purposes are equal in law, except where there appears to be a conflict between them, in which case priority shall be given to the first purpose. This is the long established Government policy often referred to as the “Sandford Principle” and since 1995 enshrined in law. It requires that the conservation of natural beauty and cultural heritage be given greater weight if there is a conflict with recreational or educational activity. The Environment Act 1995 is definitive and unambiguous that the first purpose “shall” be given greater weight in such circumstances. This means it is a requirement rather than optional. In practice, there are very few instances where recreational or educational activity would be in conflict with conservation of natural beauty or cultural heritage, not least because the National Park Authorities adopt an integrated approach to the management of the Parks’ special qualities.

2.5 In pursuing the statutory purposes, the National Park Authorities have a duty to seek to foster the social and economic well being of their local communities. The legislation makes clear that this duty is subsidiary to the purposes and its fulfilment should not undermine the priority that is given to nature conservation.

2.6 The legislative position is similar for The Broads although it has a third statutory function of protecting the interests of navigation and the Sandford Principle does not apply. European Directives have resulted in a significant³ percentage of The Broads executive area being designated as internationally important for nature conservation. The Broads statutory framework needs to be considered within this international context and in light of the limited development pressure, given that most settlements were excluded from the area when The Broads was designated.

2.7 Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 placed a duty on English and Welsh National Park Authorities, and The Broads Authority, to have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.

2.8 Section 11A(2) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act⁴ requires public bodies and statutory undertakers to have regard to the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage as they make decisions or carry out activities in or affecting National Parks.

2.9 Although the ‘have regard to’ duties are not the strongest of legal constructions, they are nevertheless useful in enabling the conservation of natural beauty to be considered explicitly, by the National Park Authorities and, more significantly, by a range of other public and statutory bodies. And in practice they have been used to support works that conserve and enhance natural beauty. This includes active participation of partners with the development of National Park Management Plans, agreeing protocols of operation that seek to protect natural beauty, or engaging in partnerships on practical projects on the ground. Examples of these are included in Sections 5 and 6 of this Statement.

2.10 For Scotland, the 2000 Act established four aims for National Parks, which are:

- to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area,

² The IUCN definition of “nature” refers to biodiversity, geodiversity, landform and broader natural values (See page 9: Dudley, N. (Editor) (2008). *Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. x + 86pp. ISBN: 978-2-8317-1086-0).

³ 25 percent of The Broads has an international designation for its biodiversity. There are nine national nature reserves and 28 sites of special scientific interest

⁴ The equivalent duty for The Broads is in Section 17A of the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988

- to promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area,
- to promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public, and
- to promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities.

2.11 The Act specifies the purpose of a Scottish National Park Authority as being to ensure that these aims are “collectively achieved in a coordinated way”. While the aim relating to economic and social development is an equivalent aim to that of conservation of natural heritage, the legislation makes clear that if the first aim appears to the National Park Authority to be in conflict with the other aims the Authority must give greater weight to conserving and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage of the area. This is a very strong provision and the use of the word ‘must’ in relation to decisions by the National Park Authority gives no legal room for manoeuvre.

2.12 In addition, the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 places a duty on all public bodies to further the conservation of biodiversity so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of their function.

3. How does the legislation for National Parks relate to the definition of a protected area as set out by IUCN?

3.1 There are two two central issues: the relationship between natural beauty and nature; and the priority given to conservation.

3.2 The statutory definition of ‘natural beauty’ includes a reference to the conservation of the area’s flora, fauna and geological and physiographical features; so it *includes* elements of nature. But at the same time the concept of natural beauty is more than biodiversity and geodiversity as it also includes important cultural and historic elements. On the other hand ‘nature’, as defined by the 2008 IUCN Guidelines, refers not only to all levels of biodiversity but also to “geodiversity, landforms and broader natural values”. Such a broad view of nature would seem to include all the natural aspects of natural beauty. A commonsense conclusion therefore is that, while nature conservation is not exactly the same as the protection of natural beauty, the protection of natural beauty will normally benefit nature conservation. The exception is where there is a very specific conflict with some other aspect of the protection of natural beauty (for example, the safeguarding of some heritage features in the landscape); in practice, such conflicts are unusual and usually localised.

3.3 National Parks are established with a clear conservation purpose that will normally take priority over development considerations. However National Parks are lived-in, working landscapes, and the law does not provide for every decision to be taken with conservation considerations trumping all others, although it does require that such considerations should always be taken into account and given much more weight than they would elsewhere. So National Parks are places where special measures are taken to safeguard natural beauty but not places where there is an absolute bar on any development that might conflict with nature. On the other hand, in many National Parks there are extensive areas where nature protection is assured through a range of landownership and land management measures, and where at least 75% is managed for the prime purpose of conservation as required by IUCN.

4. Identification of the significance for nature conservation of any relevant public policy positions that affect the area e.g. planning policy or government policy towards nature conservation

England

4.1 The UK Government Vision and Circular on National Parks⁵ states that the National Park and Broads Authorities should ensure that biodiversity is protected and encouraged through proactive, sympathetic management both within recognised protected areas and in the wider landscape. The Government considers that the Authorities have an important role in helping to deliver habitat restoration and expansion at a landscape scale, especially against the backdrop of a changing climate. The Government has identified valued, safeguarded and enhanced biodiversity as a Priority Outcome for the English National Parks for 2010-2015. In planning decisions and policies, “the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and The Broads”⁶.

4.2 As local planning authorities, the planning policies adopted by National Park Authorities are typically derived from their two Purposes. This means they will receive better protection in planning policy than other non-designated areas.

4.3 In 2010, an independent review⁷ recognised that National Parks provide an excellent base for delivering a more effective ecological network, not least because their legal standing, governance and management plans provide a basis for coordinated action to integrate effective ecological networks with landscape and other uses.

4.4 In the 2011 Natural Environment White Paper⁸, the UK Government broadly endorsed the findings of this review and announced various initiatives to join up fragmented habitats, including the establishment of 12 Nature Improvement Areas (3 of these are within National Parks).

Wales

4.5 The Welsh Government⁹ has stressed the need for the duty to have regard to biodiversity to be implemented properly and for policies on conserving and enhancing wildlife to be included in National Park Management Plans. It is the Welsh Government’s objective¹⁰ to promote the conservation of biodiversity, in particular the conservation of native wildlife and habitats. On planning, development plan policies and development control decisions in National Parks should give great weight to conserving and enhancing wildlife.

4.6 The Welsh Government’s Strategic Grant letter¹¹ to Welsh National Park Authorities identifies biodiversity as a priority objective for 2012-13 and requires the Authorities to continue to integrate biodiversity mitigation, compensation and enhancement into new developments through the planning system, and demonstrate how they are supporting others effectively to use the planning system to safeguard biodiversity.

⁵ Paragraph 51, UK Government Vision and Circular for National Parks (Defra, 2010)

⁶ National Planning Policy Framework (CLG, 2012)

⁷ Making Space for Nature (2010)

⁸ Natural Environment White Paper – the natural choice: securing the value of nature (Defra, 2011)

⁹ Policy Statement for the National Parks and National Park Authorities in Wales (Welsh Government, 2007)

¹⁰ Planning Policy Wales, Edition 4 (Welsh Government, February 2011)

¹¹ <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/desh/publications/120331parksremitletteren.pdf>

4.7 Welsh National Park Authorities are tasked with achieving biodiversity gains through the planning process and, like all local planning authorities, are required¹² by the Welsh Government to achieve net enhancements whenever and wherever possible.

4.8 The distinctive biodiversity of Wales' National Parks is referred to explicitly in the Welsh Government's Environment Strategy for Wales¹³.

4.9 The Welsh Government National Parks Policy Statement is currently being revised during 2013.

Scotland

4.10 The Scottish National Park Authorities, as public bodies, have a duty under Section 1(1) of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 to further biodiversity and to execute this duty in the context of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and the agreements of the Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Scottish Government is proposing¹⁴ a step change in aspirations for biodiversity and ecosystems. It will provide leadership in caring for nature and rekindling the relationship between people and the natural world. National Park Authorities are urged to respond to their biodiversity duty. Existing Scottish Planning Policy reinforces the principle that conservation of natural and cultural heritage should be given precedence in any conflict between the National Park aims. This continues in draft Scottish Planning Policy, which is currently out for consultation.

4.11 The Scottish Government has given the National Park Authorities specific direction on meeting their international commitments to biodiversity in its Guidance on National Park Plans. This requires: "Topics to tackle under this aim [i.e. first aim of Conserve and Enhance the Natural and cultural heritage of the area] include ...the role of the Park Authority in meeting various obligations rising from Natura 2000, the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy etc.)..."

5. An overview of current management objectives affecting the areas, including those in management plans and what they have to say about prioritising nature conservation

National Park Management Plans

5.1 National Park Authorities are required to produce a management plan for their areas. These are based on the two Purposes with priority given to the first in cases of conflict. This provides a strong starting point for the development of the Plans.

5.2 Guidance in England¹⁵ and Wales¹⁶ provides advice on how to prepare and monitor progress on management plans, which should include policies and approaches for conserving and enhancing biodiversity. Section 10 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 requires National Park Authorities to prepare National Park Plans. A quinquennial review of Park Plans in Scotland is currently underway, whilst each National Park Management Plan in England and Wales is periodically reviewed and updated.

5.3 In England and Wales, National Park Management Plans identify the semi-natural areas such as moor, heath, woodland, coast and foreshore, which are protected as Section 3¹⁷ land. This protection is important as it falls outside SSSIs/EU rules.

¹² Technical Advice Note 5 (Nature Conservation and Planning (Welsh Government , 2009)

¹³ Environment Strategy for Wales (Welsh Government, 2006)

¹⁴ A consultation on the 2020 challenge for Scotland's biodiversity (Scottish Government, 2012)

¹⁵ National Park Management Plans – Guidance (Countryside Agency, 2005)

¹⁶ National Park Management Plans Guidance (Countryside Council for Wales, 2007)

¹⁷ Section 3 of the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act

5.4 There are fifteen members of the family of UK National Parks and their management plans can be accessed via the following hyperlinks:

[Brecon Beacons](#)

[The Broads](#)

[Cairngorms](#)

[Dartmoor](#)

[Exmoor](#)

[Lake District](#)

[Loch Lomond and the Trossachs](#)

[New Forest](#)

[North York Moors](#)

[Northumberland](#)

[Peak District](#)

[Pembrokeshire Coast](#)

[Snowdonia](#)

[South Downs](#)

[Yorkshire Dales](#)

5.5 All National Park Management Plans have clear commitments to protect nature, specific targets to achieve this and make clear that this is a priority. The Natura sites found within National Parks are extremely important. Annex I provides an overview of SSSIs, Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas found in National Parks across the UK. The work of NPAs helps create more resilient landscapes for conservation. And critically much of this work is undertaken within National Parks but outside of areas designated as SSSI/ SAC.

5.6 For example, the North York Moors National Park Management Plan¹⁸ contains ambitious Park-wide plans for wildlife superhighways in order to form a coherent ecological network. The rich bat fauna found in the National Park is very largely dependent on the areas that are not SSSI/SAC. Similarly, many of the lapwing breed on in-byes just outside the SSSI/SAC boundaries. The Management Plan contains nine strong policies covering for example different habitats, habitat connectivity, biodiversity enhancements through planning, and encouraging farming practises that are sympathetic to the environment. It also contains ambitious targets for increasing the area of valued habitats.

Biodiversity action plans

5.7 National Park Authorities prepare Biodiversity Action Plans which comprise a collection of practical actions for a range of partners aimed at conserving and enhancing the area's biodiversity. The plans examine what is happening already, set out a vision for the future, and specify a work programme to improve key habitats, protect iconic and important species and raise public awareness of the importance of the area's biodiversity.

5.8 For example, the Peak District Biodiversity Action Plan¹⁹ (BAP) 2011-2020, is a blueprint by the Biodiversity Partnership to:

- Describe the species and habitats of the area

¹⁸ North York Moors National Park Management Plan (North York Moors National Park Authority, 2012) <http://www.northyorkmoors.org.uk/living-in/how-the-authority-works/management-plan>

¹⁹ Peak District Biodiversity Action Plan 2011 – 2020 <http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/looking-after/biodiversity/biodiversity-action-plan>

- Highlight the species and habitats of greatest importance or which are under the most severe threat
- Identify priorities for conservation action
- Set targets for enhancing biodiversity
- Promote and outline actions which need to be taken to benefit natural beauty, landscapes and people
- Raise awareness and understanding of the value of biodiversity to society

5.9 In 2008, the National Park ecologists of England, Wales and Scotland agreed a statement on climate change adaptation and ecological mitigation²⁰. This addresses a range of factors including increasing biodiversity/ecological resilience and safeguarding ecosystem services.

6. A summary account of examples of current management practice that demonstrate the priority given to nature conservation

6.1 All National Park Authorities have prioritised work on nature conservation and routinely initiate significant projects that would otherwise not take place. This section outlines three examples from England, Wales and Scotland of how the National Parks are giving priority to nature conservation in practice.

England – Two Moors Threatened Butterflies

6.2 Dartmoor and Exmoor National Parks are the focus of this project, working to restore the fortunes for the High Brown, Marsh and Heath Fritillary butterflies. These populations need large areas of land to ensure their survival. Conservation efforts have to cover a wide area. On Dartmoor and Exmoor these species live on three main habitat types:

- Steep bracken dominated slopes
- Moorland edge in sheltered valleys
- Wet grassland or 'Rhôs' pasture found in valley systems

6.3 All three species have highly specialised habitat requirements and management is needed to create the right conditions. The project provides advice and support, through a project officer, to landowners on habitat management if these species occur on their land or if there is potential for habitat restoration. The work is targeted within priority areas of Dartmoor and Exmoor where the most important populations of the key species are found. To date, more than 140 sites have been visited and management advice has been given for more than 1500 hectares of butterfly habitat.

Wales – removal of grazing in Cwm Idwal, Snowdonia National Park

6.4 Removal of sheep grazing from Cwm Idwal NNR in Snowdonia is allowing the rare arctic-alpine vegetation to re-establish itself, following many years of high levels of grazing. The Cwm is special as many of its cliffs and rocks support arctic-alpine plant species, many of which are on the edge of their European distribution.

²⁰ <http://www.breconbeacons.org/environment/climate-change/mitigation-adaption-to-climate-change-in-the-uks-national-parks-1>

Scotland – wetland and wader conservation in the Cairngorms National Park

6.5 The Strathspey Wetlands and Waders Initiative²¹ in the Cairngorms National Park was set up to work with farmers and other landowners to safeguard wetland habitats and the future of the nationally important wader population in Badenoch and Strathspey - the largest of its kind in mainland Britain. It is a partnership between the Cairngorms National Park Authority, the RSPB, SAC/advisers and farmers.

6.6 Badenoch and Strathspey are nationally important for wader populations and this project delivers co-ordinated action at landscape scale. In addition it has resulted in:

- 9,000 hectares surveyed to identify and monitor wader trends
- management plans with Scottish Rural Development Programme support approved on 36 sites
- 500 hectares of wetland under management for waders
- 250 hectares of flood management also delivered

7. A look forward with a summary of the ambition and vision for nature conservation in the areas

7.1 While the legislative and policy framework for National Parks allows for a high priority to be given to natural beauty, there are a number of external factors that could undermine conservation efforts, including climate change, development pressure and competing land uses. In order to address this, the National Parks have identified and signed up to major ambitions for the future of nature conservation in their areas, and are becoming increasingly recognised as places where biodiversity conservation should be focused.

7.2 The National Park Authorities recognise that while much progress has been delivered, there is much more that can be achieved in terms of conserving and enhancing biodiversity.

7.3 IUCN can expect those National Parks who are a party to this Statement of Compliance to make sure that all future management plans give a high priority to the conservation of nature. This priority will be explicit in the aims and objectives of the new plans.

Summary of ambition

England

7.4 Over 23% of land in the English National Parks is designated as Site of Special Scientific Interest (mostly recognised as Category IV), in recognition of its national conservation significance. The National Park Authorities intend to turn the government's vision of flourishing wildlife and connected habitats into a reality. They recognise that they have a central role to play in halting biodiversity decline in England and in demonstrating approaches to biodiversity conservation that can be applied across the country. Their vision is set out in *Beacons for Biodiversity*²² and they are active members of the Government's England Terrestrial Biodiversity Group. In February 2013, all National Park Authority Chief Executives reinforced their collective commitment to deliver improved biodiversity conservation in England's National Parks.

²¹ <http://www.cairngorms.co.uk/look-after/conservation-projects/wetland-wader-initiative>

²² [England's National Parks – Beacons for Biodiversity](#) (ENPAA, 2010)

Wales

7.5 National Parks Wales (this is the name given to the three Welsh National Park Authorities as they work in partnership to promote the purposes and interests of Wales' National Parks) has called for an investment in biodiversity conservation, in order to maximise the resilience of habitats, species and ecosystems in the face of climate change.

7.6 The Welsh National Parks are represented on the Wales Biodiversity Partnership steering group, and the 3 National Parks contribute to the Framework through the ecosystem groups, local BAP partnerships and management of priority habitats in their areas.

Scotland

7.7 A high percentage of land in the Scottish National Parks is designated as nationally/internationally important for nature conservation – 49% designated under NATURA in the Cairngorms, and 12% in Loch Lomond & The Trossachs. Both the Cairngorms and the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authorities identify conserving and enhancing biodiversity as a priority for action in their Park Plans, including through increased habitat connectivity, catchment management planning and achieving the targets set out in the biodiversity action plans.

8. Conclusion

8.1 The legislation affecting National Parks in England and Wales and The Broads affords a strong statutory basis from which to deliver nature conservation goals. They are well established designations in which natural beauty and wildlife is given priority when they are in conflict with economic or social development, recreation and educational activity. While there is no legislative basis for affording priority to wildlife should there be a conflict with conserving natural beauty or cultural heritage, the integrated management planning approach of the National Park Authorities is considered sufficient to ensure that the majority of conflicts are avoided through forward planning and stakeholder engagement.

8.2 In Scotland, the strong conflict resolution mechanism and the duty to further biodiversity conservation indisputably make the case for Protected Area status.

8.3 Policy drivers from the UK and Devolved Governments send very clear signals about the important role that the National Parks in the UK must play in halting biodiversity decline (see for example Annexes II and III).

8.4 National Park Management Plans and Biodiversity Action Plans identify priority biodiversity outcomes and pathways and partners to achieve these.

8.5 In every National Park there are examples of projects that give primacy to biodiversity.

8.6 Large areas of the National Parks are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Special Areas of Conservation or Special Protection Areas. This reflects their biodiversity importance nationally and internationally. However, it is important to remember that the legislative and policy priority given to nature extends across the whole of the area of the National Parks. There is much nature outside the SSSIs, much of which will be protected by Section 3 Conservation Maps.

8.7 In conclusion, it is the combination of legislation, policy, planning and practice that results in biodiversity outcomes being given primacy in the National Parks and that justify the continued recognition of UK National Parks as IUCN Protected Areas.

Annex I

THE IMPORTANCE OF NATIONAL PARK AREAS FOR NATURE CONSERVATION

As part of preparing this Statement of Compliance, the Joint Nature Conservancy Council was asked to provide information on SSSI and Natura 2000 sites found within National Parks. The data is reproduced below.

Country	SSSI	SAC / SPA
English National Parks	296,362/1,082,600 = 27.4%	252,987/642,213 = 39.4%
Scottish National Parks	128,923/1,014,029 = 12.7%	233,534/1,182,283 = 19.6%
Welsh National Parks	99,164/261,430 = 37.9%	70,096/147,090 = 47.7%
Total	524,449/2,358,059 = 22.2%	556,617/1,971,586 = 28.2%

Notes

1. Clipped by NP boundary/total for country
2. All values shown in hectares
3. Total area values for SAC/SPA are for terrestrial area only and do not include area below mean high water mark. ie inshore/offshore.
4. Total area values for SSSI include all area - terrestrial and below MHW.

Annex II

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PARKS AGAINST PROTECTED AREA CRITERIA (KEY A²³)

	Criteria	Yes/no	Short explanation by reference to legislation etc.
		Answer for England/ Scotland/Wales	Answer for England/Scotland/Wales
1	Is the site a clearly defined geographical area?	E - Yes S - Yes W – Yes	E – National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and subsequent individual National Park Designation Orders. S – Scotland National Parks Act 2000 and subsequent individual National Park Designation Orders. W - National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and subsequent individual National Park Designation Orders.
2	Is it recognised, dedicated and managed to achieve the long-term conservation of nature? NB ‘nature’ includes all levels of biodiversity as well as geodiversity, landforms and broader natural values (see Appendix 4 for detailed definition)	E - Yes S - Yes W – Yes	E – To conserve and enhance natural beauty is the first statutory purpose of National Parks as set out in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. S – To conserve and enhance natural beauty is the first statutory purpose of National Parks as set out in the Scotland National Parks Act 2000. W – To conserve and enhance natural beauty is the first statutory purpose of National Parks as set out in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.
3	Is the main management objective nature conservation? Other objectives of equal standing	E See S Explanation W	For National Parks in all three countries, the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage is a first purpose.

²³ Keys A – B are taken from IUCN NCUK (2012); Putting nature on the map – identifying protected areas in the UK: A handbook to help identify protected areas in the UK and assign the IUCN management categories and governance types to them, IUCN National Committee for the United Kingdom

	<p>may be present but they do not cause conflict, i.e. nature conservation is the priority</p>		<p>Other purposes also exist, and where there is conflict legislation (Scotland National Parks Act 2000 for Scotland, and the Environment Act 1995 for England and Wales) determines that the first purpose should take priority. Nature conservation alone does not have priority. However in practice, the NPAs manage their areas in an integrated manner and any conflicts are rare and localized.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Does the designation of the site prevent, or eliminate where necessary, any exploitation or management practice that will be harmful to the objectives of designation?</p>	<p>E - Yes S - Yes W – Yes</p>	<p>E- National Planning Policy makes it clear that great weight should be given to the conservation of wildlife (National Planning Policy Framework 2012) and local planning is determined by the National Park Authority itself, which is delivered in order to achieve its first purpose to conserve and enhance natural beauty.</p> <p>S – Latest Draft Scottish Planning Policy (April 2013) makes it clear that ‘Development that affects a National Park....should only be permitted where: it will not adversely affect the integrity of the area or the qualities for which it has been designated; or any such adverse effects are clearly outweighed by social, environmental or economic benefits of national importance.’ The document also makes clear that conservation of natural and cultural heritage should take precedence where there are conflicts with other objectives. The NPA is the planning authority, and so applies this in ways that furthers its first aim to conserve and enhance natural beauty.</p> <p>W - National Planning Policy makes it clear that great weight should be given to the conservation of wildlife (Planning Policy Wales Edition 4, 2011) and local planning is determined by the National Park Authority itself, which is delivered in order to achieve its first purpose to conserve and enhance natural beauty.</p>

5	Does the designation of the site aim to maintain, or ideally, increase the degree of naturalness of the ecosystem being protected?	E - Yes S - Yes W – Yes	<p>E - To conserve and enhance natural beauty is the first statutory purpose of National Parks as set out in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.</p> <p>S – To conserve and enhance natural beauty is the first statutory purpose of National Parks as set out in the Scotland National Parks Act 2000.</p> <p>W – To conserve and enhance natural beauty is the first statutory purpose of National Parks as set out in the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.</p>
6	Is the long-term nature conservation ensured through legal or other effective means? E.g. national or international statutory law/ agreement/convention, traditional rules or NGO policy.	E - Yes S - Yes W – Yes	<p>E – Conservation is achieved through the National Park Authority being the Planning Authority for the area; through the development (in partnership) of National Park Management Plans; through the duty placed on NPAs and others to have regard to conserving biodiversity (Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and the duty on all public bodies to have regard to National Parks (National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949). The importance of nature conservation is reflected in the Government’s main policy document, the National Parks Circular and Vision 2010.</p> <p>S – Conservation is achieved through the National Park Authority being the responsible Planning Authority for the area; through the development (in partnership) of National Park Management Plans; through the duty placed on NPAs and others to have regard to conserving biodiversity (Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004); and the duty on all public bodies to have regard to National Parks (National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949). The importance of National Parks contributing to biodiversity outcomes is clearly set out in guidance to them on the preparation of National Park Plans.</p>

			<p>W – Conservation is achieved through the National Park Authority being the Planning Authority for the area; through the development (in partnership) of National Park Management Plans; through the duty placed on NPAs and others to have regard to conserving biodiversity (Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and the duty on all public bodies to have regard to National Parks (National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949). The importance of nature conservation is reflected in the Welsh Government's Policy Statement for National Parks (2007).</p>
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ANNEX III

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PARKS AGAINST PROTECTED AREA CRITERIA (KEY B)

	Common Objectives	Yes/No Answer for England, Scotland, Wales
1	Does the site conserve the composition, structure, function and evolutionary potential of biodiversity?	E - Yes S - Yes W - Yes
2	Does the site contribute to regional strategies (as core reserves, buffer zones, corridors, stepping stones for migratory species etc)?	E - Yes S - Yes W - Yes
3	Does the site maintain diversity of landscape or habitat and of associated species and ecosystems?	E - Yes S - Yes W - Yes
4	Is the site of sufficient size to ensure the integrity and long-term maintenance of the specified conservation targets?	E - Yes S - Yes W - Yes
5	Is the site capable of being increased to achieve the integrity and long-term maintenance of the specified conservation targets?	E - Yes S - Yes W - Yes
6	Does the site maintain the values for which it was assigned in perpetuity?	E - Yes S - Yes W - Yes
7	Does the site operate under the guidance of a management plan, and a monitoring and evaluation programme that supports adaptive management?	E - Yes S - Yes W - Yes
8	Does the site possess a clear and equitable governance system?	E - Yes S - Yes W - Yes
Number of common objectives met (must be 5+)		E - 8 S - 8 W - 8