



Protected Areas Working Group

Statements of Compliance for UK protected areas and ‘other effective area-based conservation measures’

A call for updated and new evidence from the Protected Areas Working Group (PAWG) of the IUCN National Committee UK

In December 2023, the Protected Areas Working Group (PAWG) of the IUCN National Committee UK (NCUK) published a report entitled *Statements of Compliance for UK protected areas and ‘other effective area-based conservation measures’: 2023 review*. You can find the full 2023 technical report [here](#). This work will also be published in the journal PARKS¹: the international journal of protected areas and conservation published by the World Commission on Protected Areas of IUCN (Robinson *et al.*, in press).

This independent, evidence-based assessment and technical report reviewed, in these Statements of Compliance (SoCs), 23 designation types used across the UK, (covering terrestrial and marine areas, important for biodiversity and landscape/seascape conservation) against IUCN’s definitions of ‘protected areas’ and ‘other effective area-based conservation measures’ (OECMs)². The aim of the work is to provide this independent assessment against internationally agreed guidance and standards, to enable stakeholders to understand the opportunities to improve the status of protection across the UK where there are specific gaps (e.g., in management effectiveness), and to improve progress towards the 30by30 target and the associated reporting at domestic and international levels. We restricted the 2023 analysis to information that PAWG could find in publicly available sources, e.g., websites and published reports.

In the report, PAWG outlined its intention to update these SoCs on an annual basis, reflecting actual or anticipated changes in policy and practice in relation to the designation types assessed. To this end, we welcome further information from stakeholders until the end of September 2024, to be taken into account in our first update. Any new evidence we receive will be used to further inform and update the Statements of Compliance. We urge anyone who wishes to submit updated or new material to read the report carefully first to ensure any data or information sources have not already been referred to or are not relevant to the analysis undertaken.

We have developed a few questions below which will help those with new and/or updated data and information to focus on where it can help PAWG to improve its analysis. Please submit material for any of the 23 designation types covered by the 2023 report, for any of the four countries across the UK and in offshore marine and consider whether your response covers all or a sub-set of the elements covered by the SoCs for any of the sites covered by each designation type.

All submissions should be sent to IUCNUK.PAWG@wwt.org.uk by 30 September 2024. We thank you in advance for your submissions and will recognise and reference any new material used in our updated assessment.

1. Protected area qualification

¹ PARKS is the international journal of protected areas and conservation, published by the World Commission on Protected Areas of IUCN

² Protected area and OECMs are area-based conservation mechanisms recognised to achieve delivery of [Target 3 of the CBD Global Biodiversity Framework](#) i.e. to conserve 30% of land, inland waters and seas by 2030.

Q1.1. Do you wish to suggest any changes to how we described any of the site designation types and their objectives? If available, please provide any published material that evidences your proposed change.

Q1.2. Do you have any new or evidence not in the public domain that would change our assessments of:

- Whether the site designation type has clearly defined geographical boundaries?
- Whether the site designation type (or a specified sub-set of sites within this type) is recognised, dedicated, and managed to achieve the long-term conservation of nature?
- Whether the main management objective of the site designation type (or a specified sub-set of sites within this type) is nature conservation?
- Whether the designation of the site prevents, or eliminates where necessary, any exploitation or management practice that will be harmful to the objectives of the designation?
- Whether the long-term nature conservation is ensured in the site designation type category through legal or other effective means?

Q1.3. Can you clarify when this evidence will be put into the public domain and/or what your plans are for greater transparency of this evidence?

2. Other Effective area-based Conservation Measure (OECM) qualification

For those designation types that PAWG and/or you do not believe meet the criteria as a protected area:

Q2.1. Do you have any additional evidence that the sites in the category, in full or in part, have the essential characteristics required to meet the OECM definition, i.e. are they geographically defined, governed and managed, and such arrangements are expected to be ongoing and sustained over the long-term, deliver effective in-situ conservation of biodiversity, and are free of environmentally damaging activities and threats to biodiversity?

Q2.2. Do you have any additional evidence that the conservation outcome for sites in this category will, or will not, endure over the long-term?

Q2.3. If you disagree with our assessment, which *in-situ* area-based conservation targets (e.g., GBF Target 3) are being met by this OECM?

3. Management effectiveness

Whether you agree with our determination of site categories qualifying for protected area or OECM status:

Q3.1. Do you have any new and/or updated documentation that provides evidence of the management of the types of protected area/OECM?

Q3.2. Do you have any new and/or additional evidence that the measures to achieve the conservation objectives within the protected area/OECM site type are being implemented?

Q3.3. Can you provide any new and/or additional evidence that monitoring is in place to assess if management (and other) measures afforded to the protected area/OECM site type are working?

Q3.4. Do you have new and/or additional evidence that protected areas/OECMs within the site types are moving towards achieving or have reached their conservation objectives?

