

Responsibilities of Statutory bodies in relation to Protected Areas

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Natural England's purpose



To ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development

(Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006)

Types Protected Areas

A considerable range of types and purposes

- International, National, and local
- Biological eg SSSI, Natura 2000, AoSP (29; W&CA); LNRs (over 1400; 35,000ha)
- Geological eg SSSI, RiGs
- Landscape eg National Parks; AoNBs; Heritage Coast
- Access eg National Trails;
- Heritage eg Scheduled Ancient Monuments; Registered Parks and Gardens

Some 38 types of designations in England where Natural England has some level of influence

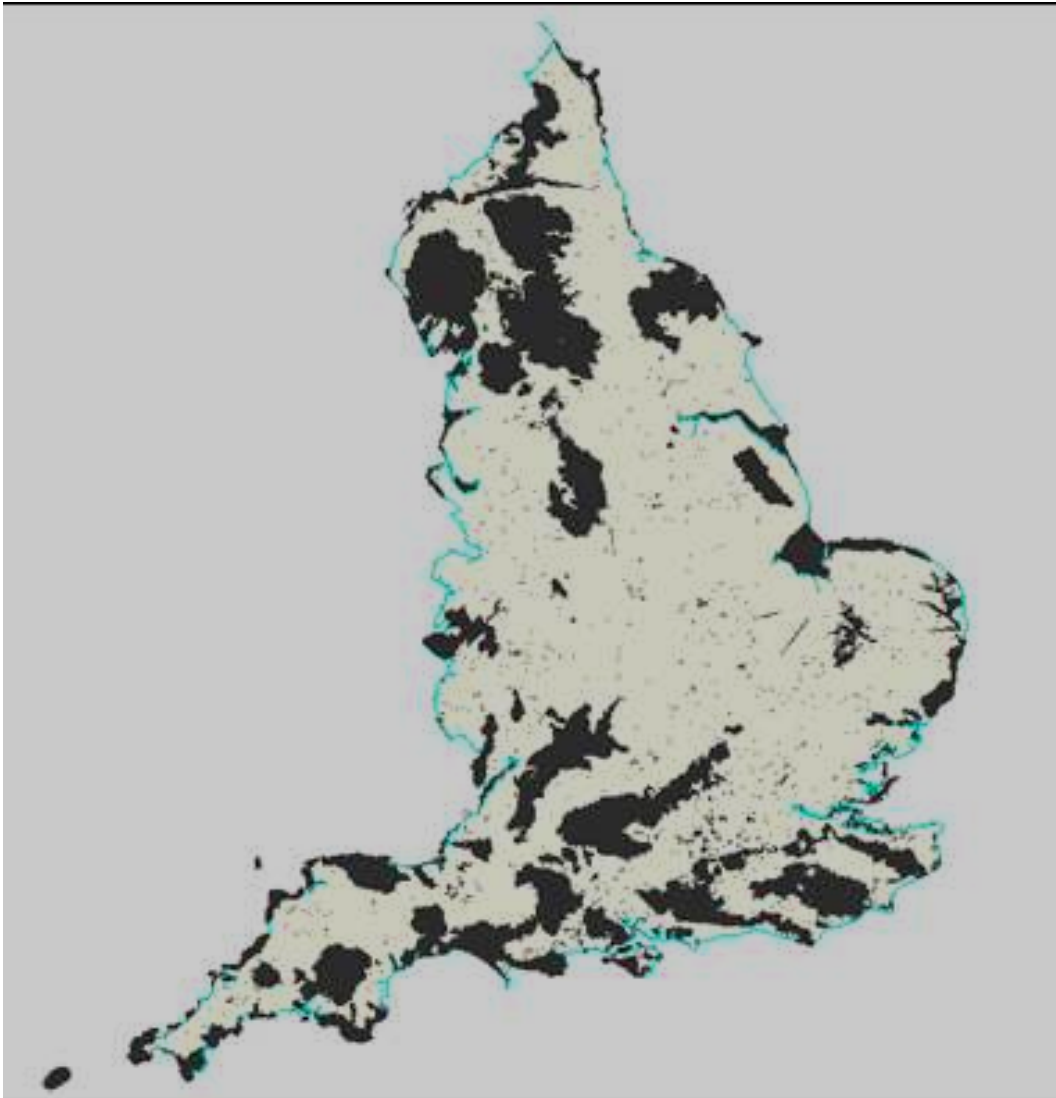
Area of Statutory Designations in England



- Overall some 25% of land
- SSSIs – 1.014 million ha; 7.6% of area above MLW (England – 13.293 m ha above MLW)
- National Parks – 1.051 m ha; 7.9%
- AoNBs – 2.035 m ha; 15.3%
- SAC – 0.688 m ha; 5.2%
- SPA – 0.646 m ha; 4.9%
- Marine Conservation Zones - ?

Not exclusive – many designations overlap

Statutory designations in England



Duties and Powers

Natural England has a range of duties and powers, and responsibilities. These vary according to the type of designations, eg

- SSSIs – a **duty** to notify, and **power** to confirm
- Natura 2000 – to make **recommendations** to SoS
- A **power** to make an AoNB or National Park Designation Order
- To discharge our role as **statutory advisors** as appropriate, eg in MCZ recommendations to the SoS
- Additionally other public bodies have duties to advise Natural England of proposals which may affect...

Regulation, Incentive and Management



- Natural England have regulatory and enforcement powers for SSSIs, applicable to owners and occupiers, public bodies and third parties.
- Financial support – eg Agri-environment schemes; AoNB grants
- There are 223 NNRs covering 0.089 m ha, of which Natural England directly manages 70% by area

Reporting and accountability

- SSSI PSA target – over 89% in favourable or recovering condition; PSA target is 95%.

Protected landscapes

- 8 National Parks plus the Broads (8% of England by area), and 36 AoNBs (15%)
- South Downs will add to the NPs, but result in the revocation of two AoNBs
- 34 Heritage coasts in England and Wales covering 1, 057 km of the coastline, of which 89% lies within NPs and AoNBs
- IUCN (the world conservation body) protected area categories as “category v – protected landscapes”. Some 6.4% of all the world’s protected areas are category v, with around 40% concentrated in Europe

Protected landscapes

- England's most iconic and intrinsically valued countryside. They are lived-in, working landscapes that provide diverse opportunities for tourism, outdoor recreation, enjoyment and understanding with associated economic and improved public health benefits.
- Natural England has a number of statutory powers and duties in relation to protected landscapes; designation and variation, monitoring, advising Ministers on their management and governance.
- Like all relevant authorities, Natural England also has a duty to have regard to the purposes of designation of National Parks, AONBs and The Broads when carrying out our functions.

Protected Landscapes – draft positions



- Sets out the position we will adopt in furthering the role of protected landscapes and our related advisory and guidance activities, both now and in the immediate future.
- Provides our approach to new and amended designations, and sets out how we will continue to work in partnership with the organisations representing the national family of protected landscapes.
 - Intrinsic values which deliver benefits
 - Capable of delivering more
 - Some public policy, legislation and guidance needs review (eg National park circular)
 - Nationally significant landscapes merit statutory protection
 - Heritage Coast needs reviewing – eg status in land use planning is uncertain

Capable of delivering more - Fit for 20th century; what about the 21st ?



- Climate change – how do we accommodate, and account for rapid change
- Connectivity and join up – Defra announcement
- How do we better communicate their value?
 - **Carbon** regulation through peat storage (c. 300 billion tonnes C in England; National Parks hold the equivalent of 1 years worth of C emissions);
 - **wildlife and recreation**, The English uplands contain 53% of SSSIs and 75% are National Park or AoNB. The upland National parks have 70 million visitors a year; how get across our messages.
 - The IA for the marine and coastal access Bill found that the potential benefits of a UK network of MCZs could outweigh costs by between 7 and 40 times, with estimated benefits of between £7 and £19 billion

Hilary Benn announces review of England's Wildlife and Ecological Network [in England]



- Announced 28 Sept 2009, to report June 2010
- The review will explore if our collection of sites represents a coherent and robust ecological network for England, capable of responding to the challenges of climate change and other pressures
- It will also look to see what benefits could be gained by connecting sites within designated areas and outside them through re-wilding initiatives. The team will be asked to take account of ecological, economic and social costs and benefits of such a programme and make costed and prioritised recommendations