



GREENPRINT

Our framework
for a green
recovery

World Class Blue/Green Environments: Consultation Summary Summer 2022



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Greenprint World Class Blue/Green Environments Consultation Summary

Summer 2022

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1. Introduction

1.1 About Greenprint

The Greenprint is a joint initiative led by New Forest National Park Authority, University of Southampton, University of Portsmouth, and Southern Policy Centre, working with Partnership for South Hampshire. The objective of the Greenprint framework is to enhance collaboration across and within sectors to achieve a green recovery together.

The Greenprint framework has been developed from existing plans and strategies, and through dialogue with a range of stakeholders, reflecting the distinctive characteristics of our area: our renowned coastline and national parks; the interconnected mosaic of urban, suburban and rural communities; our excellent educational and research institutions; a commitment to building sustainable places; and building climate resilience by working with local businesses and innovative Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The framework focuses on five priorities: Net Zero with Nature, World Class Blue/Green Environments, Natural Health Service, Quality in Design and Build, and Green Skills and Jobs.

Between June and August 2022, Karolina Zarzyczny (the Greenprint Initiative secondee) conducted a series of interviews with a range of stakeholders and experts across the Central South. The objective of the interviews was to gather expert and key stakeholder opinions, regarding the actions which should underpin the Greenprint Framework. This document provides a summary of the consultation for the World Class Blue/Green Environments priority.

1.2 World Class Blue/Green Environments

The World Class Blue/Green Environments priority is focused on protecting, restoring and improving our distinctive, high quality blue and green environments, enabling the natural capital and ecosystem services they provide to contribute fully to a strong economy and a healthy, inclusive society. The theme is split into two outcomes:



Land Restoration and Protection

“Regional environmental commitments work towards evidence-based restoration and enhancement of natural, native biodiversity. Land use and land management plans identify and pursue opportunities for evidence-based restoration and resilience building, starting with protected/designated sites. The region ceases degradation of regions rich in natural capital, such as peatland and heathland, and woodland areas.”



Water Restoration and Protection

“Regional environmental commitments work towards evidence-based restoration and enhancement of natural, native biodiversity. Blue environment plans identify and pursue opportunities for evidence-based restoration and resilience building, considering gains for blue carbon and ecosystem health such as oyster restoration, seagrass restoration and saltmarsh restoration. The region ceases degradation of areas rich in natural capital, such as blue carbon or nursery fishing stocks.”

2. Method of consultation

2.1 Interviewee selection

The Greenprint framework was developed through dialogue with a range of stakeholders and experts which came together in Communities of Practice. For the consultation, members of Communities of Practice were invited for an online interview, to provide their thoughts and expertise on actions which they believe should underpin the Greenprint framework. Individuals new to Greenprint, were invited on recommendation from other Community of Practice members.

For this consultation, we interviewed six experts: Sienna Somers (Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust), Graham Horton (Natural England), Sarah Taylor (Natural England), Nick Tomalin (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds), Dr. Hachem Kassem (University of Southampton), and a representative from Coastal Partners.

2.2 Interview format

All the interviews were between 30—60 minutes long, and took place over Microsoft Teams. When a call was not possible, consultation was carried out over email. All the experts and stakeholders were interviewed by Karolina Zarzyczny.

The interviewees were first asked to provide an overview of their understanding of Greenprint, as well as their involvement in the initiative so far. The interviewees were then updated on the Greenprint progress, asked to confirm whether they understand the two World Class Blue/Green Environments outcomes, and were given the opportunity to comment on the outcome definitions.

With the outcomes in mind, the interviewees were asked to provide their opinions on what actions they believe should be taken across the Central South, in order to achieve the Greenprint outcomes. Where appropriate, the interviewees were asked to identify the challenges and obstacles to achieving the outcomes, and provide suggestions for overcoming them. Finally, the interviewees were given an opportunity to add any other comments.

The objective of the Greenprint framework is to enhance collaboration across and within sectors to achieve green growth together.





3. Common themes across both objectives.

3.1. Overview

Throughout the interviews, common themes and challenges emerged across the outcomes and sectors. Those themes and challenges are applicable to organisations, businesses, councils and authorities across central south. The common themes and challenges for restoring and protecting both water and land, are summarised below:

-  Restoration of native biodiversity is crucial. However, suitable assessments are required to ensure restored habitats are able to withstand future climatic projections meaning the use of non-native species may be more suitable for some locations.
-  Biodiversity net gain should be considered at all spatial scales; from small outdoor spaces owned by local businesses, to local greening projects and restoration of entire landscapes.
-  A holistic approach to habitat restoration, protection and planning for Net Zero is required for highest impact.
-  Local nature recovery strategies need to aim beyond the environment act, and should be an essential component of the planning frameworks.
-  Greening cities can be challenging, but the focus should be on increasing overall biodiversity suitable for the location, rather than solely relying on tree or foliage cover.
-  Most councils and local authorities have declared a Climate Emergency. The same commitment is needed for protection and restoration of the natural environment.
-  Engagement from large-scale landowners is crucial.

3.2 Suggested actions

Based on the emerging common themes, a summary of the suggested actions relating to both Land Restoration and Protection, and Water Restoration and Protection is displayed in the table on page 7.

Action	Aim of the action.	Sector	Possible metrics	Challenges	Taking it further
Declare an “Ecological” or a “Nature Emergency”.	This action underpins the World Class Blue Green Environments Theme. The declaration reflects commitments to protecting and restoring the natural environment.	Councils and authorities.	Binary measure: has the authority declared an emergency? Actions arising from the declaration can focus on biodiversity metrics, percentage of habitat cover, and lists of native species restored.	Challenges are associated with actions following the declaration, rather than with the declaration itself.	Work with local businesses and residents to recognise what the “Ecological” or “Nature Emergency” means for them.
Have a set of policies making Biodiversity Net Gain a focal point of local plans and strategic planning. Local nature recovery strategies need to go beyond the Environment Act.	By ensuring every planning decision considers Net Gain and beyond, nature recovery will become the standard. Policy reinforces implementation. This action can be carried out at a large scale (local authorities), but also across smaller scales (businesses, and land owners).	Most organisations, businesses, higher education, councils and authorities.	Biodiversity metrics, percentage of habitat cover, and lists of native species supported by the restored or protected habitats.	Guidance is needed for local businesses and land owners. This guidance could be developed by the local authorities or councils. Expert input is needed to inform effective decision making but challenges may arise from the shortage of ecologists.	Smaller land owners and businesses can support nation wide biodiversity monitoring by reporting metrics to national or local citizen science projects.
Habitat protection and restoration plans are considered within Net Zero plans and vice versa.	Nature-based solutions can support Net Zero plans. Habitats can be prioritised based on their capacity to support both biodiversity and Net Zero plans. Contributes to Net Zero with Nature.	Organisations, businesses, higher education, councils and authorities.	Mapping habitats against their ability to support biodiversity and carbon sequestration potential can assist in prioritising areas for recovery.	Within different regions, space allowing for sequestration of carbon is limited. Collaborative action across the larger region could help overcome this.	Consider both objectives of this theme together. Plans should consider a range of habitats including forests, peatlands, mudflats, oyster beds, saltmarshes, and seagrasses.
Conduct a habitat restoration and protection assessment. The assessment should focus on native species and resilience to climate change.	Large scale habitat assessment can aid in prioritisation of areas for regional restoration and protection. Land owners can assess what actions can be taken at a smaller scale to support this objective.	Most organisations, businesses, higher education, councils and authorities.	The data generated from mapping habitats can assist in measuring action impact. Native species lists can inform biodiversity metrics.	For large scale restoration, challenges arise from understanding how resilient to climate change the habitats are. This action will require collaboration across sectors.	Smaller land owners and businesses can support nation wide biodiversity monitoring by reporting metrics to national or local citizen science projects.
Restore existing designated areas.	Many designated areas are not in favourable conditions. Suitable biodiversity needs to	Large landowners	Data on biodiversity and condition of a designated areas.	Challenges arise from involving and incentivising large-scale landowners.	

4. Land Restoration and Protection

4.1 Overview



Land Restoration and Protection

“Regional environmental commitments work towards evidence-based restoration and enhancement of natural, native biodiversity. Land use and land management plans identify and pursue opportunities for evidence-based restoration and resilience building, starting with protected/designated sites. The region ceases degradation of regions rich in natural capital, such as peatland and heathland, and woodland areas.”

Outcome 1 focusses on restoring and protecting terrestrial environments. Restoration should focus on suitable biodiversity and habitat resilience to future stressors such as climate change.

4.2 Suggested actions

A summary of the suggested actions relating to Land Restoration and Protection is displayed in the table below:

Action	Aim of the action.	Sector	Possible metrics	Challenges	Taking it further
Whilst protecting habitats, provide educational information to the public and provide alternative spaces to people when they are being temporarily displaced by seasonal wildlife.	Birds such as Brent Geese are disliked by many residents in the Central South. This is because people are often restricted from entering natural areas whilst the geese are feeding. Residents need to be educated on the importance of protecting the geese, and provided with alternative natural spaces to interact with.	Councils, local authorities, higher education and NGOs.	First set of metrics can be focussed on the effects on biodiversity. Second set of metrics can focus on human behaviour; engagement with the alternative spaces and resources, and statistics on intervention actions.	Challenges may arise in identifying alternative spaces in already busy regions. Suitable language needs to be used for different demographic groups.	Coordination on regional level could help enabling sectors secure governmental funding.
Run or support an educational campaign focussed on educating people on the importance of protecting wild, and natural environments.	Many important habitats (such as wild flower verges) do not necessarily look biodiverse or aesthetically appealing. Features such as information plaques across cities can educate people on the habitat importance, and also provide information on how they can engage with the environment. Face to face interaction can be even more effective.	Organisations, businesses, higher education, councils and authorities.	At a local authority level, metrics can be collected in the form of engagement. This data can be obtained either from surveys, scanning information QR codes or pressing a feedback button. Local businesses can conduct staff and customer surveys in a similar way, whilst education institutions can assess the student engagement.	Individual actions can be easily implemented at on small scale (businesses, schools or private organisation) at a low cost. Coordinated region-wide campaign will require collaboration and coordination across sectors. Suitable language needs to be used for different demographic groups.	Coordination on regional level could help enabling sectors secure governmental funding.

Action	Aim of the action.	Sector	Possible metrics	Challenges	Taking it further
Conduct a land-use and land-health audits.	Understanding the current health of the land, and how the land-use is connected to its health can maximise the impact of any mitigation plans.	Organisations, businesses, councils and authorities managing land.	Assessing the impact of land use can assist in identifying opportunities for a reduction in pollution which often needs to be reduced before the habitat is restored.	Requires collaboration and coordination across sectors. May require incentives, particularly in the agricultural sector.	Include a range of environmental impacts in the audit such as soil quality, coastal erosion, nitrogen deposition and other pollution.
Provide support to land owners during the transition period from the old EU and BPS schemes, into new schemes prepared by the Government.	Significant land owners need to be targeted for investment into nature recovery. As the EU and BPS schemes are phasing out, land owners are struggling to navigate the transition period. The support should include financial support, non-financial benefits, and advice.	Councils, local authorities and national parks.			Coordination on regional level could help enable sectors secure governmental funding.
Join or create a wilding cities and communities scheme.	Cities need more pockets of green spaces with the focus on biodiversity rather than solely foliage cover. Communities should be involved in decision making and can even participate in bringing nature to residential areas. This is particularly important in deprived areas where access to nature is limited. Involving locals in planning and action creates a sense of belonging and is a big step towards behaviour change.	Councils, local authorities, national parks and NGOs.	Metrics on public engagement and biodiversity.	Requires coordination between sectors. NGOs such as the Wild Life Trust can help deliver community campaigns but their capacity is limited by funding.	Coordination on regional level could help enable sectors secure governmental funding.
Run or participate in a regional working group which involves both private and public sectors, to coordinate and share knowledge on land restoration and protection.	For maximised impact, private and public sectors need to work together and avoid competing for land. Sharing knowledge and coordination on habitat restoration and protection projects allows sharing best practice and experience.	Organisations, businesses, higher education, councils, authorities and NGOs.	Metrics can focus on positive outcomes in a form of regular reports.	Requires coordination between sectors.	Coordination on regional level could help enable sectors secure governmental funding.

5. Water Restoration and Protection

5.1 Overview



Water Restoration and Protection

“Regional environmental commitments work towards evidence-based restoration and enhancement of natural, native biodiversity. Blue environment plans identify and pursue opportunities for evidence-based restoration and resilience building, considering gains for blue carbon and ecosystem health such as oyster restoration, seagrass restoration and saltmarsh restoration. The region ceases degradation of areas rich in natural capital, such as blue carbon or nursery fishing stocks.”

Outcome 2 focusses on restoring and protecting water environments. Restoration should focus on suitable biodiversity and habitat resilience to future stressors such as climate change.

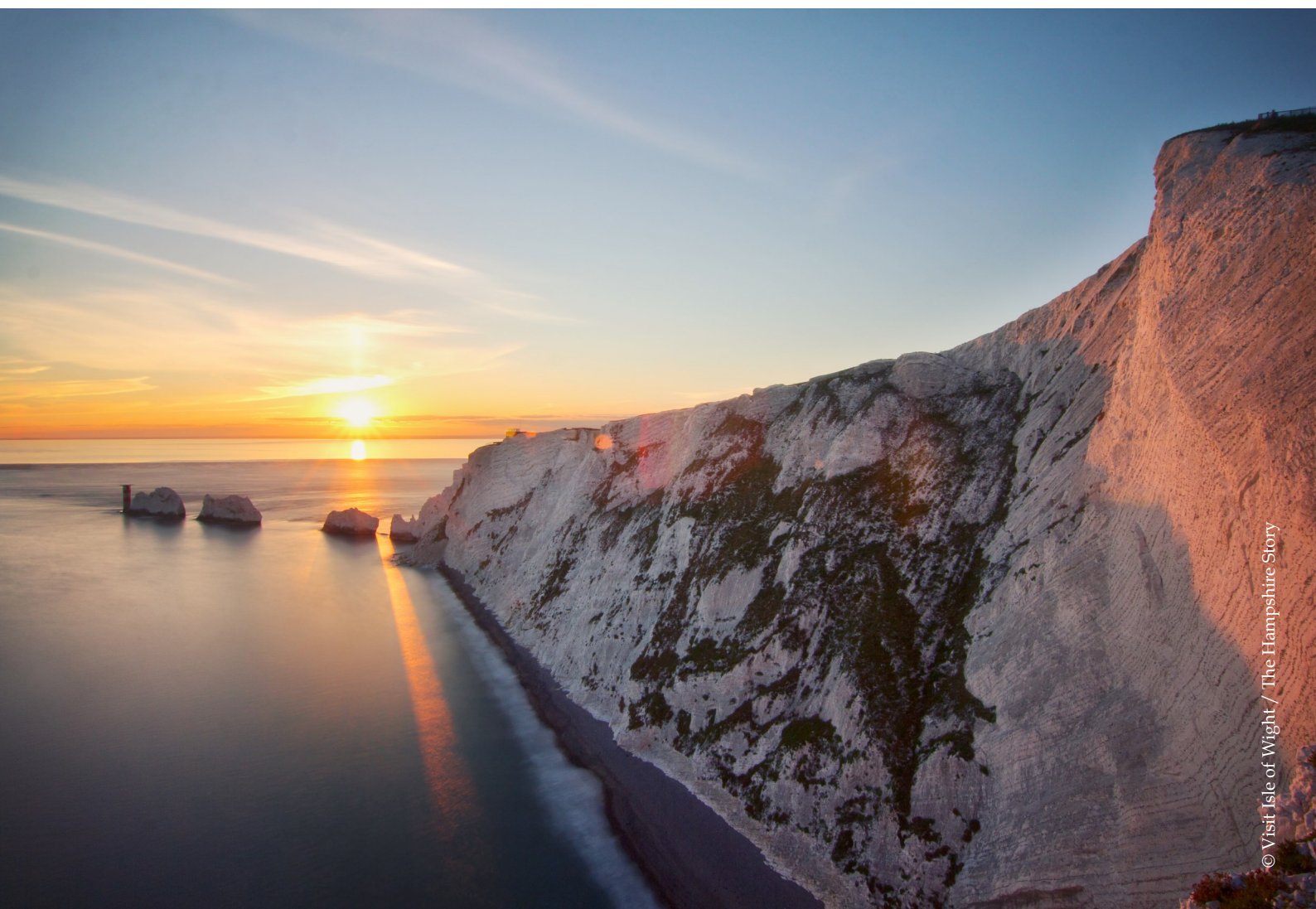
5.2 Suggested actions

A summary of the suggested actions relating to Water Restoration and Protection is displayed in the table below:

Action	Aim of the action.	Sector	Possible metrics	Challenges	Taking it further
Conduct or support a thorough assessment of freshwater health and use across the central south. Harmful activities need to be altered, limited or stopped entirely.	Freshwater habitats are facing several threats arising from habitat destruction, climate change, sewage discharge and agricultural run off. Understanding the current health status of Hampshire's freshwater habitats and the factors affecting them, is crucial for restoration and protection.	Councils, local authorities, national parks and NGOs. Businesses can partner with the River Trust to improve the quality of waterways locally.	Metrics can be collated on different pollution measurements and biodiversity present. Further data can be gathered on the range of freshwater activates and their associated impacts.	Much of the data already exists on a larger scale. Local assessments may have costs associated with them but can provide clear “current-state” metrics which allow for focussed targets.	Smaller land owners and businesses can support nation wide biodiversity monitoring by reporting metrics to national or local citizen science projects.
Conduct or support a throughout assessment of the coastal and estuarine habitat health, and activities across the central south. Harmful activities need to be altered, limited or stopped entirely.	Marine habitats are facing several threats arising from habitat destruction, climate change, sewage discharge and other activities. Understanding the current health status of Hampshire's marine habitats and the factors affecting them, is crucial for restoration and protection.	Councils, local authorities, national parks and NGOs. Businesses can partner with the Ocean Conservation Trust improve the quality of local marine habitats.	Metrics can be collated on different pollution measurements and biodiversity present. Further data can be gathered on the range of coastal and maritime activates, and their associated impacts.	Much of the data already exists on a larger scale. Local assessments may have costs associated with them but can provide clear “current-state” metrics which allow for focussed targets.	Smaller land owners and businesses can support nation wide biodiversity monitoring by reporting metrics to national or local citizen science projects.

Action	Aim of the action.	Sector	Possible metrics	Challenges	Taking it further
Run or support an educational campaign focussed on educating people on the importance of blue environments	Many ecologically important habitats such as estuaries or mudflats are not recognised as important, particularly when they do not appear aesthetically pleasing. Features such as information plaques across cities can educate people on the habitat importance but also provide information on how they can engage with the environment.	Organisations, businesses, higher education, councils and authorities.	At a local authority level, metrics can be collected in the form of engagement. This data can be obtained either from surveys, scanning information QR codes or pressing a feedback button. Local businesses can conduct staff and customer surveys in a similar way, whilst education institutions can assess the student engagement.	Individual actions can be easily implemented at on small scale (businesses or private organisations located by the coast) at a low cost. Coordinated region-wide campaign will require collaboration and coordination across sectors. Suitable language needs to be used for different demographic groups.	Coordination on regional level could help enabling sectors secure governmental funding.
Whilst protecting habitats, provide educational information to the public and provide alternative spaces to people when they are being temporarily displaced by seasonal wildlife.	Birds such as Brent Geese are disliked by many residents in the Central South. This is because people are often restricted from entering natural areas whilst the geese are feeding. Residents need to be educated on the importance of protecting the geese, and provided with alternative natural spaces to interact with.	Councils, local authorities, higher education and NGOs.	First set of metrics can be focussed on the effects on biodiversity. Second set of metrics can focus on human behaviour; engagement with the alternative spaces and resources, and statistics on intervention actions.	Challenges may arise in identifying alternative spaces in already busy regions. Suitable language needs to be used for different demographic groups.	Coordination on regional level could help enabling sectors secure governmental funding.
Reduce the impacts of Solent dredging.	Parts of the Solent need to be regularly dredged to allow for safe maritime and boat traffic. Currently, a large portion of the dredged sediment is released offshore where it is lost permanently. This sediment can be redirected and used to restore important coastal habitats such as mudflats. Opportunities for the use of dredged sediment need to be communicated effectively to appropriate authorities.	Councils, local authorities, higher education, businesses and NGOs.	Volume of sediment dredged, portion of the sediment recovered, and metrics on size of habitat restored.	This action requires collaboration between sectors. Higher education and NGOs can assist in providing science-based suggestions for redirecting the sediment. Local authorities, councils and port authorities need to come to an agreement and drive the change.	

Action	Aim of the action.	Sector	Possible metrics	Challenges	Taking it further
Where possible and most beneficial, remainder rivers to slow the flow of water.	Remaindering rivers slows the water flow down which in turn supports flood management, and creates more microhabitats for freshwater biodiversity.	Local authorities and large landowners.	Rate of water flow, general river health and biodiversity measures.	Costs associated with landscaping.	Coordination on regional level could help enabling sectors secure governmental funding.
Assess recreational access to rivers and lakes. Encourage access where suitable and reduce access where it is damaging to the environment	Safe access to rivers promotes engagement with nature and in turn can encourage positive behaviour change. Access to freshwater needs to be safe and not damaging to the natural environment.	Local authorities and large landowners.	Metrics on human interaction with the environment, measures of negative impact such as litter or trampling.	Costs associated with appropriate surveys.	



5. Useful Resources

This section contains a list of useful online resources and examples supporting the suggested actions. The useful resources list is not exhaustive, and there is a range of resources available online, which have not been added to this list. Please note, Greenprint does not endorse any of the listed organisations and the purpose of this list is solely to provide Greenprint partners with a starting point and ideas which could be incorporated into their future planning.



[Carbon Storage and Sequestration by Habitat \(Natural England, 2021\)](#) is an official report reviewing and summarising the evidence for carbon sequestration rates by different habitats. The report contains information relevant to policymakers.



[Quantifying the potential impact of nature based solutions on greenhouse gas emissions from UK habitats \(The Wildlife Trusts, 2022\)](#) is an official report assessing GHG emissions and carbon storage by habitat.



[The Rivers Trust](#) website contains several resources on the [health of local rivers](#) including a “State of our Rivers Report” and an interactive Sewage Map. Moreover, businesses can become [partners](#) to support recovery and protection of rivers, locally.



The [Ocean Conservation Trust](#) website contains several resources and opportunities to get involved in ocean restoration and protection. Businesses can become [partners](#), whilst local Councils can join the [Motion for the Ocean](#).



[Site Improvement Plans for London and South East](#) contain detailed actions which need to be taken across Natura 2000 sites, as recommended by Natural England.

Greenprint is a joint initiative led by:



Working with:

