



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

UK Government perspective on natural capital

*Conference on Natural and Cultural Capital: the Future of Europe
Botanical Garden of Rome, Italy. 24 November 2014*

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The evidence base: the UK National Ecosystem Assessment

- **Nature is critically important** to our wellbeing and economy.
- But it is **consistently undervalued** in decision-making
- Many of nature's services are **in decline or in a degraded state**



Synthesis of the Key Findings

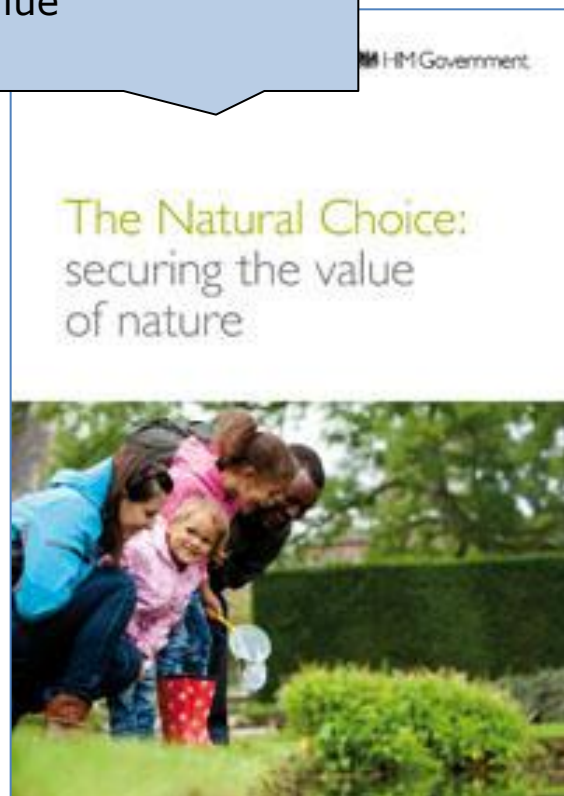


Synthesis of the Key Findings



Evidence has informed policy strategies so that they set the right framework for taking ecosystems and their services into account

Natural Environment White Paper (June 2011) – key theme of natural value



Biodiversity 2020:
A strategy for England's wildlife
and ecosystem services

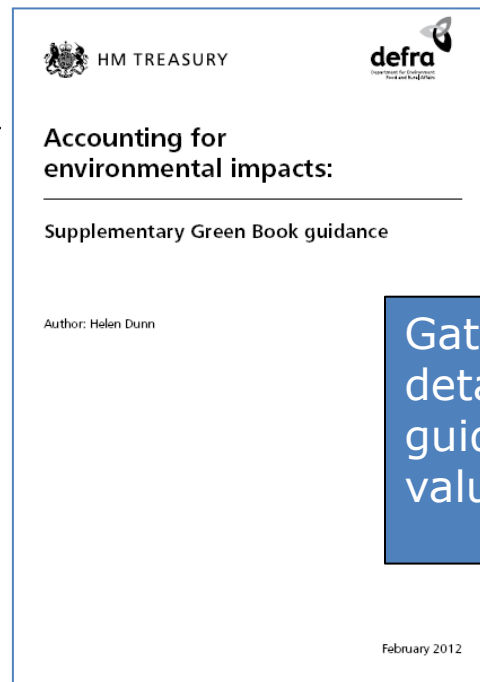
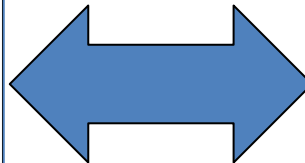
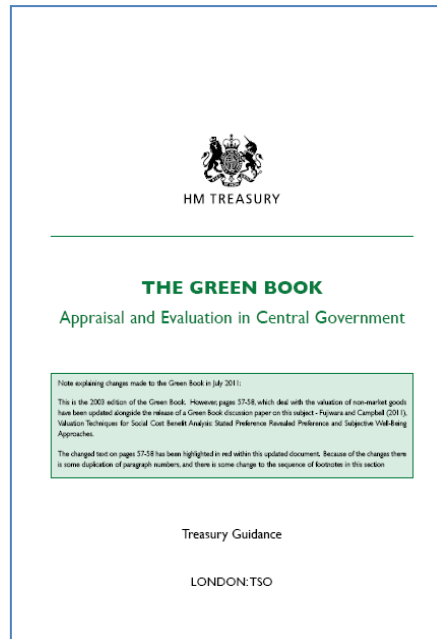


Biodiversity 2020 (July 2011) – **The biodiversity strategy for England.** A new approach to biodiversity conservation / focus on whole natural systems as well as individual species and sites, includes specific ecosystem approach outcome

New guidance on taking better account of the value of nature in government policy appraisal

UK Treasury 'Green Book (2003): Sets out basic principle of project and policy assessment and evaluation

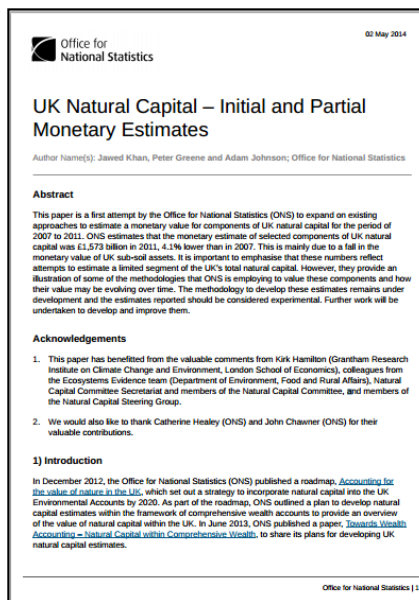
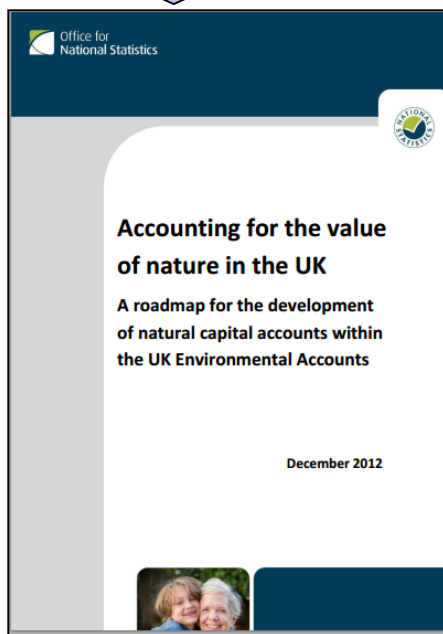
Supplementary guidance on accounting for environmental impacts (2012): High level guidance on identifying and valuing impacts



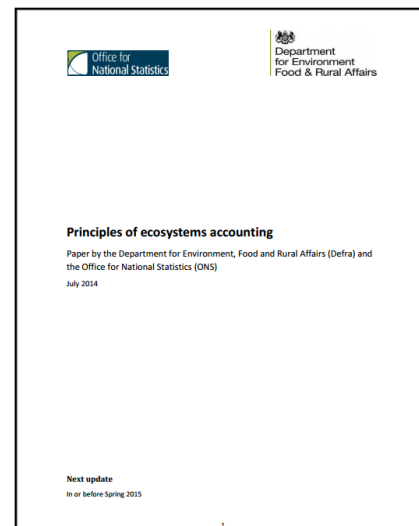
Gateway for more detailed technical guidance, e.g. On value transfer

A programme of work on incorporating the value of nature in the UK's national accounts

Roadmap to Natural Capital Accounting (Dec 2012): Sets out programme of work to 2020

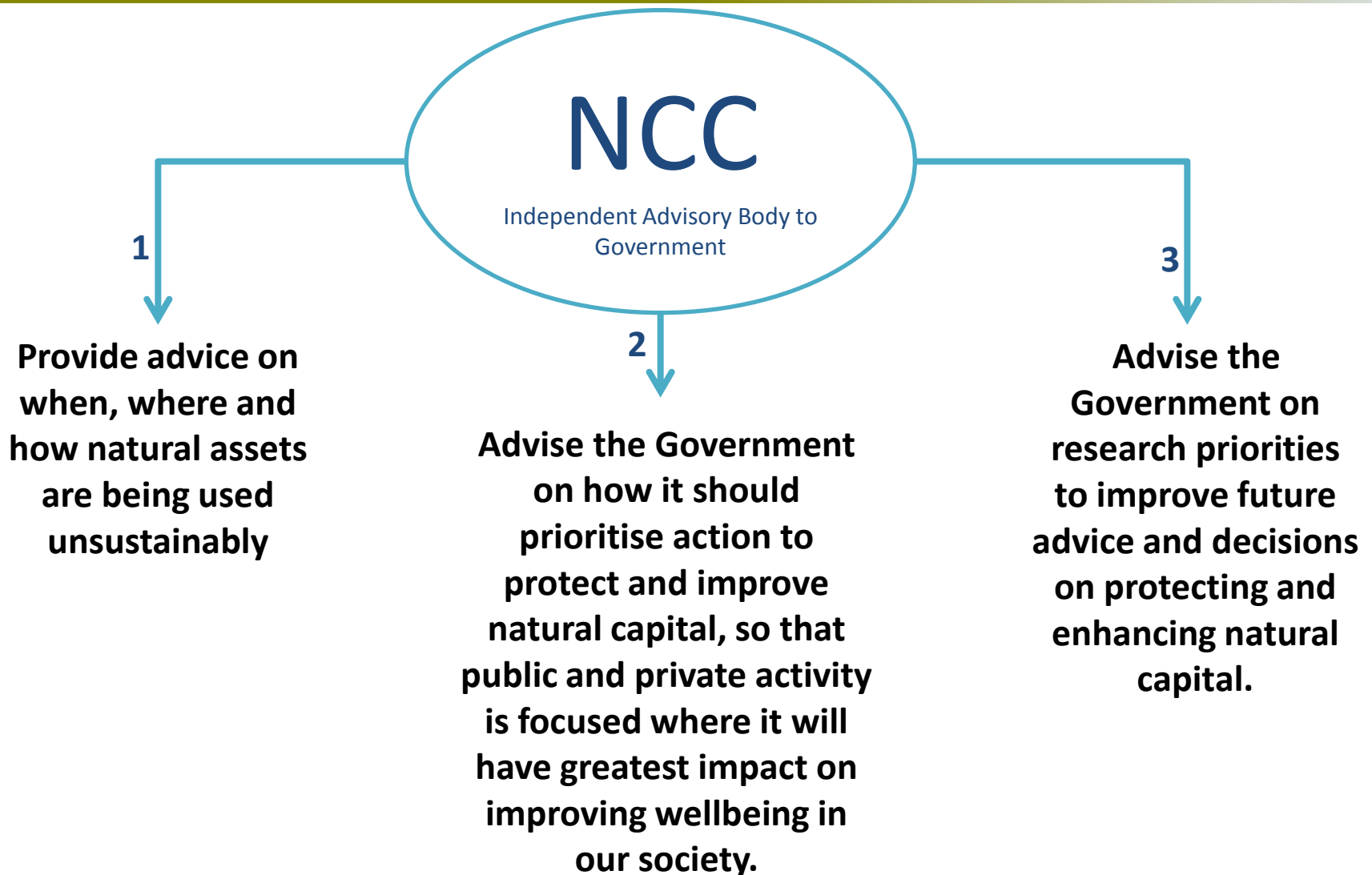


First partial estimates of the value of UK Natural Capital (May 2014)



Principles of ecosystem accounting paper (August 2014)

Role of Natural Capital Committee



Reports to the Economic Affairs Committee chaired by the Chancellor



Developing greener markets - opportunities for business that might be realised through an enhanced approach to the natural environment




ecosystemmarkets
TASK FORCE

Realsing nature's value:
The Final Report of the Ecosystem
Markets Task Force

March 2013

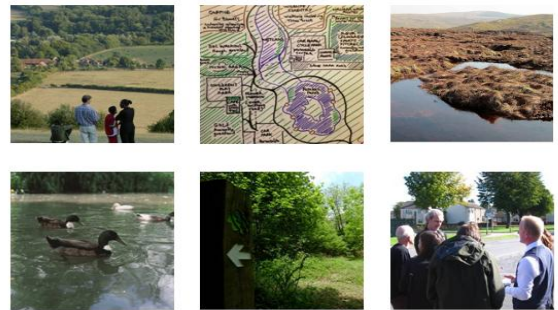



 www.gov.uk/defra

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**Developing the potential for Payments for
Ecosystem Services: an Action Plan**

May 2013



 Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs

- Peatland restoration, South Pennines** (North West)
- Canal & Rivers Trust Pilot, Leeds-Liverpool Canal** (North East)
- Visitor Payback, South Pennines** (North West)
- Hull, flood risk management and green space** (East of England)
- Pumilion, The Pumilion Project** (West Midlands)
- River Fowey Auction to improve water quality** (South West)
- River Lea, Luton** (East of England)
- Upper Thames Cotswold Catchment Pilot** (South East)
- Poole Harbour Catchment** (South West)
- Sewage treatment, Little Avon** (South West)

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Establishment of 12 Nature Improvement Areas driving ecosystem restoration on a landscape scale

- NIAs: cross-sectoral partnerships (local authorities, NGOs, private land managers and local businesses)
- driving ecosystem restoration on a landscape scale
- NIAs are a flagship ecosystem approach initiative, taking the policy from headline messages into local application and delivery

Case study: North Devon (river Torridge catchment)

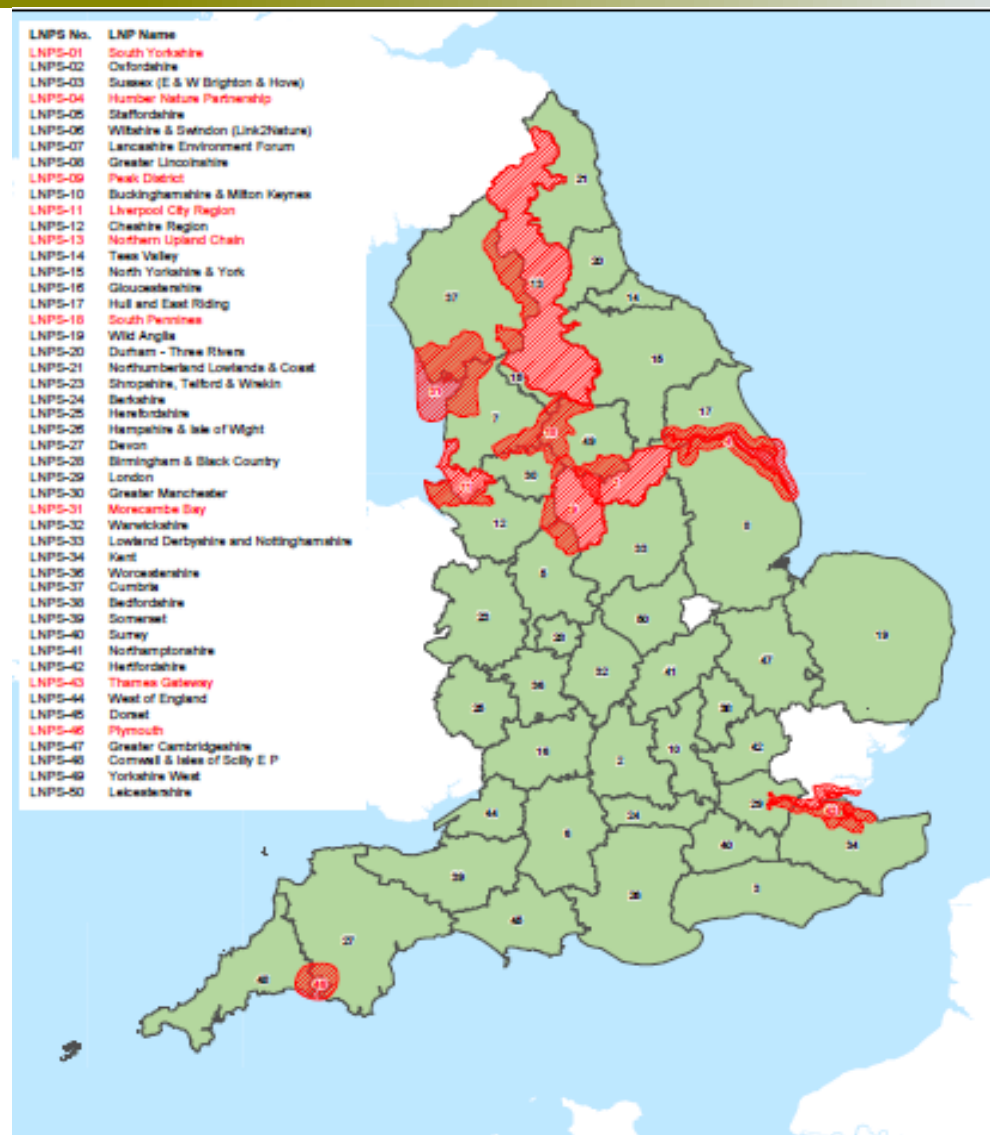
- 750 ha of culm grassland restored
- 100 ha of wetland/woodland creation
- 43 Km of hedgerow restored
- Advised 10% of the catchment's landowners (435 visits)
- Volunteer biodiversity surveys
- Over 50 community events



Establishing Local Nature Partnerships to help drive local action

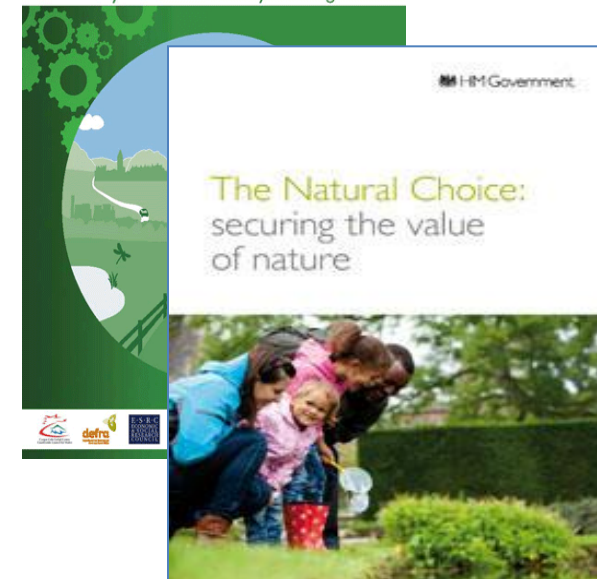
The purpose of an LNP is to:

- Drive positive change in the local natural environment.
- Contribute to achieving the Government's national environmental objectives locally.
- Be local champion for the natural environment and its value to social and economic outcomes.



High level messages: the case for investing in natural capital

- Concept of natural capital helping to reframe debate on importance of natural environment to economy and society
- Recognising the value of natural capital to country's long-term economic growth and prosperity
- Investing in natural capital can deliver substantial economic benefits
- Compelling evidence is important!



“The natural world, its biodiversity and its ecosystems are critically important to our well-being and economic prosperity, but are consistently undervalued in conventional economic analyses and decision making”

UK National Ecosystem Assessment

Thank you

Relevant links

UK National Ecosystem Assessment: <http://uknea.unep-wcmc.org/>

Natural Environment White Paper:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-natural-choice-securing-the-value-of-nature>

Natural Capital pages on the ONS website:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/user-guidance/natural-capital/index.html>

Natural Capital Committee: <https://www.naturalcapitalcommittee.org/>

Defra Payment for Ecosystem Services initiatives:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/payments-for-ecosystem-services-pes-best-practice-guide>