



## 1. Introduction

Our commitment to promoting biodiversity is incorporated in the policy statements and at Veolia group level through Impact 2023 commitments. This procedure defines how biodiversity is incorporated into our activities.

## 2. Scope

This procedure applies to all Veolia UK and Ireland locations, although it is recognised that biodiversity impacts are particularly relevant at certain sites.

## 3. References

- 3.1 Environmental Sustainability Policy Statement
- 3.2 Global Sustainable Development Commitments
- 3.3 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and subsequent changes of Schedule Orders)
- 3.4 Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008
- 3.5 Veolia Green Charter
- 3.6 2020-2023 Biodiversity Commitment

## 4. Definitions

Biodiversity (Biological Diversity)	Is the variability among living organisms from all sources including, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.
Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs)	These were developed in response to the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity at the Rio Earth Summit. There is a UK BAP as well as local BAPs and species specific BAPs.
Environmental Impact Assessment	A requirement of The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulation 2017.
BREEAM (Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method)	An environmental assessment method for buildings. Credits are awarded in ten categories according to performance. Land use and ecology form one of these categories.
Suitably Qualified Ecologist	As defined in the BREEAM guidance, in summary holds a degree or equivalent qualification in ecology or a related subject and is a practising ecologist, with a minimum of three years relevant experience.
Biodiversity Footprint Tool	A Biodiversity Self-Assessment designed to help sites of significance, assess the opportunities in terms of biodiversity and help define the relevant actions to be implemented.



The Manager

Where used within this procedure refers to the manager with direct responsibility for the Site/Contract/Location /Department/Portfolio of sites regardless of actual job title.

## 5. Procedure

### 5.1 Commitment

As part of our Group and UK and Ireland policies we are committed to preserve and restore ecosystems and species on our sites. We shall encourage the involvement of interested parties in developing our actions. Our group objectives include -

Carrying out an evaluation of biodiversity at 100% of sensitive sites by 2023 and deployed their actions plans by at least 75% in conjunction with a suitably qualified ecologist.

### 5.2 Protection of Existing Flora and Fauna

There are requirements under wildlife legislation to prevent damage and disturbance to certain protected habitats and species. There may also be species and habitat protection under specific local or national BAPs.

At some Company locations and operations there is a specific requirement to maintain habitats and areas of countryside whether it be part of a local authority contract or maintenance of Company open space. It is therefore vitally important that consideration is given to the types of plants and animals which may be effected by our activities, in particular those species listed in the schedules of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. Where an activity takes place on or close to sensitive areas (refer Appendix 1) such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) a local procedure or management plan may be required to ensure all relevant considerations are met.

Company operations that require consideration include grounds maintenance, landfill, restoration, landscaping works and new developments. For example, grass cutting/hedge trimming/tree cutting must not be carried out where it will cause disturbance to nesting birds and arboriculture works should also take account of roosting bats.

If protected species are thought to be present then these must be reported through normal line management.

### 5.3 Reporting on Biodiversity

Biodiversity measurement should be included in annual reporting. All sites shall report on the biodiversity performance through the electronic reporting system (Enablon). Data provided through this system will be used to produce the annual environmental/corporate social responsibility report, which will include consideration of the biodiversity performance of the Company.

### 5.4 Relevance of Biodiversity

The commitment to biodiversity is a central Company policy and all staff are expected to play their part. It is recognised that actual habitat improvements are relevant to sites with control of their landholding. Sites that are tenanted and sites that only have hardstand or buildings are limited in their potential for biodiversity improvements.



### 5.5 Sites with significant landholdings

Where sites are able to influence their landholding, biodiversity improvements shall be included. These improvements may form part of statutory planning conditions.

Sites involved in reforming landscape, for example landfill operations and major construction works, shall design operations and operate to protect and improve habitat where possible. If UK BAP, local BAPs or species BAPs affect the site then these should be followed in any design or operational works.

Potential biodiversity impacts on a site shall be included in the sites Aspects register. The Business Unit Manual can be used to describe the management of any identified habitats and species.

All sites that are considered to have significant potential stakes and opportunities on biodiversity as defined by the biodiversity toolkit shall implement an action plan on biodiversity improvement. Please note that the details of the action plan should be noted in the relevant section of Enablon.

### 5.6 Operational Landfill Sites

Under typical conditions an ecological baseline survey will have been undertaken prior to the start of works at the planning stage as part of the environmental assessment. This survey will be used to measure any subsequent change caused by the development. As such additional survey work may be required through the life of the project. Where a baseline survey has not been undertaken this shall be carried out in order to monitor biodiversity.

An action plan based on the baseline survey will be developed with the intention of protecting and enhancing habitat where possible. It is the responsibility of the site manager to develop, maintain and ensure works are undertaken in accordance with this action plan. The involvement of local conservation bodies and wildlife trusts in this process is encouraged. The action plan will involve restoration stage of works and may continue post restoration.

All records relating to biodiversity must be maintained on site and shall be referred to in the sites Master Records List.

If unexpected or unknown species are identified onsite during the course of works, consideration of the impact on the action plan is required.

### 5.7 Closed Landfill Sites

In recognition of the variable settings and ages of closed landfill sites not all such sites shall require an assessment of biodiversity improvement based on ecological surveys. Any aftercare and maintenance activities shall take due regard of the potential effects on biodiversity.

### 5.8 New Development Projects

All new development projects subject to planning permission shall be assessed against the BREEAM methodology.

### 5.9 Training and Awareness

Biodiversity is included as part of environmental awareness induction.



## 6. Variation

None.

## 7. Documentation

### Appendix 1 - Designation of Protected Sites affecting Biodiversity

#### 1. **Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) (in England and Wales and Northern Ireland)**

The primary purpose of the AONB designation is to conserve natural beauty – which by statute includes wildlife, physiographic features and cultural heritage as well as the more conventional concepts of landscape and scenery. AONBs are designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, amended in the Environment Act 1995. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 clarifies the procedure and purpose of designating AONBs. In Scotland, National Scenic Areas are broadly equivalent to AONBs.

#### 2. **Special Protection Areas (SPAs) (in England, Scotland and Wales)**

Sanctuary Areas are strictly protected sites classified in accordance with Article 4 of the EC Birds Directive. Designation aims to prevent the disturbance and destruction of the birds for which the area was identified, by making it unlawful to damage or destroy either the birds or their nests and in some cases by prohibiting or restricting access to the site.

#### 3. **Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) (in England, Scotland and Wales)**

Under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, LNRs may be declared by local authorities after consultation with the relevant statutory nature conservation agency. LNRs are declared and managed for nature conservation, and provide opportunities for research and education, or simply enjoying and having contact with nature.

#### 4. **Marine Nature Reserves (MNRs)**

The purpose of MNRs is to conserve marine flora and fauna and geological features of special interest, while providing opportunities for study of marine systems. They are the mechanism for the protection of nationally important marine (including sub tidal) areas. Statutory MNRs are established under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 for England, Scotland and Wales.

#### 5. **National Nature Reserves (NNRs)**

NNRs contain examples of some of the most important natural and semi-natural terrestrial and coastal ecosystems in Great Britain. They are managed to conserve their habitats or to provide special opportunities for scientific study of the habitats communities and species represented within them. NNRs are declared by the statutory country conservation agencies under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

#### 6. **National Parks**

In England and Wales, the purpose of National Parks is to conserve and enhance landscapes within the countryside whilst promoting public enjoyment of them and having regard for the social and economic wellbeing of those living within them. The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 established the National Park designation in England and Wales. In addition, the Environment Act 1995 requires relevant authorities to have regard for nature conservation.



The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 enabled the establishment of National Parks in Scotland. In addition to the two purposes described above, National Parks in Scotland are designated to promote the sustainable use of the natural resources of the area and the sustainable social and economic development of its communities. These purposes have equal weight and are to be pursued collectively unless conservation interests are threatened.

7. **Natura 2000**

Natura 2000 is the name of the European Union-wide network of nature conservation sites established under the EC Habitats and Birds Directives. This network will comprise Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

8. **Ramsar sites**

Ramsar sites are designated under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, agreed in Ramsar, Iran, in 1971. Originally intended to protect sites of importance especially as waterfowl habitat, the Convention has broadened its scope over the years to cover all aspects of wetland conservation and their wise use, recognizing wetlands as ecosystems that are extremely important for biodiversity conservation in general and for the well-being of human communities.

9. **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (England, Scotland and Wales)**

The SSSI have developed since 1949 as the national suite of sites providing statutory protection for the best examples of the UK's flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features. These sites are also used to underpin other national and international nature conservation designations. Originally notified under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, SSSIs have been re-notified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Improved provisions for the protection and management of SSSIs were introduced by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (in England and Wales) and the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004.

10. **Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Sites of Community Importance (SCI)**

SACs are designated under the EC Habitats Directive. SACs are areas which have been identified as best representing the range and variety within the European Union of habitats and (non-bird) species listed on Annexes I and II to the Directive. SACs in terrestrial areas and territorial marine waters out to 12 nautical miles are designated under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended). Sites which have been adopted by the EC, but not yet formally designated by governments of Member States are known as Sites of Community Importance (SCIs). In the UK, designation of SACs is devolved to the relevant regulatory authority within each country. SACs, together with SPAs, form the Natura 2000 network

11. **Special Protection Areas (SPA)**

SPAs are classified by the UK Government under the EC Birds Directive. SPAs are areas of the most important habitat for rare (listed on Annex I to the Directive) and migratory birds within the European Union. SPAs in terrestrial areas and territorial marine waters out to 12 nautical miles are classified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

12. **The regulatory authorities relevant to Biodiversity**

Natural England - <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england>

Scottish Natural Heritage - <http://www.snh.gov.uk/>

Natural Resource Wales - <http://naturalresourceswales.gov.uk/?lang=en>