

## **Appendix 8A.2**

### **Biodiversity Evaluation Scheme<sup>1</sup>.**

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<sup>1</sup> amended after NRA 2009 and Nairn & Fossitt 2004

## Biodiversity Evaluation Criteria

### International Importance:

- 'European Site' including Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Site of Community Importance (SCI), Special Protection Area (SPA) or proposed Special Area of Conservation.
- Proposed Special Protection Area (pSPA).
- Site that fulfils the criteria for designation as a 'European Site' (see Annex III of the Habitats Directive, as amended).
- Features essential to maintaining the coherence of the Natura 2000 Network.
- Site containing 'best examples' of the habitat types listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive.
- Resident or regularly occurring populations (assessed to be important at the national level\*) of the following:
  - Species of bird listed in Annex I and/or referred to in Article 4(2) of the Birds Directive and/or;
  - Species of animal and plants listed in Annex II and/or IV of the Habitats Directive.
- Ramsar Site (Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially Waterfowl Habitat 1971).
- World Heritage Site (Convention for the Protection of World Cultural & Natural Heritage, 1972).
- Biosphere Reserve (UNESCO Man & The Biosphere Programme).
- Site hosting significant species populations under the Bonn Convention (Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, 1979).
- Site hosting significant populations under the Berne Convention (Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, 1979).
- Biogenetic Reserve under the Council of Europe.
- European Diploma Site under the Council of Europe.
- Salmonid water designated pursuant to the European Communities (Quality of Salmonid Waters) Regulations, 1988, (S.I. No. 293 of 1988).
- Major salmon river fisheries.

### National Importance:

- Site designated or proposed as a Natural Heritage Area (NHA).
- Statutory Nature Reserve.
- Refuge for Fauna and Flora protected under the Wildlife Acts.
- National Park.
- Undesignated site fulfilling the criteria for designation as a Natural Heritage Area (NHA); Statutory Nature Reserve; Refuge for Fauna and Flora protected under the Wildlife Act; and/or a National Park.
- Resident or regularly occurring populations (assessed to be important at the national level\*) of the following:
  - Species protected under the Wildlife Acts; and/or
  - Species listed on the relevant Red Data list.
- Site containing 'viable areas'\*\* of the habitat types listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive.
- Major trout river fisheries.
- Commercially important coarse fisheries.
- Waterbodies with major amenity fishery value.

### County Importance:

- Area of Special Amenity^.
- Area subject to a Tree Preservation Order^.
- Area of High Amenity^, or equivalent, designated under the County Development Plan.

### Biodiversity Evaluation Criteria

- Resident or regularly occurring populations (assessed to be important at the County level\*) of the following:
  - Species of bird listed in Annex I and/or referred to in Article 4(2) of the Birds Directive;
  - Species of animal and plants listed in Annex II and/or IV of the Habitats Directive;
  - Species protected under the Wildlife Acts; and/or
  - Species listed on the relevant Red Data list.
- Site containing area or areas of the habitat types listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive that do not fulfil the criteria for valuation as of International or National importance.
- County important populations of species, or viable areas\*\* of semi-natural habitats or natural heritage features identified in the National or Local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) if this has been prepared.
- Sites containing semi-natural habitat types with high biodiversity in a county context and a high degree of naturalness, or populations of species that are uncommon within the county.
- Sites containing habitats and species that are rare or are undergoing a decline in quality or extent at a national level.
- Small waterbodies with known salmonid populations or with good potential salmonid habitat.
- Large waterbodies with some coarse fisheries value.

#### Local Importance (higher value):

- Locally important populations of priority species or habitats or natural heritage features identified in the Local BAP if this has been prepared.
- Resident or regularly occurring populations (assessed to be important at the Local level\*) of the following:
  - Species of bird listed in Annex I and/or referred to in Article 4(2) of the Birds Directive;
  - Species of animal and plants listed in Annex II and/or IV of the Habitats Directive;
  - Species protected under the Wildlife Acts; and/or
  - Species listed on the relevant Red Data list.
- Sites containing semi-natural habitat types with high biodiversity in a local context and a high degree of naturalness, or populations of species that are uncommon in the locality.
- Sites or features containing common or lower value habitats, including naturalised species that are nevertheless essential in maintaining links and ecological corridors between features of higher ecological value.
- Small waterbodies with some coarse fisheries value or some potential salmonid habitat.
- Waterbodies with unpolluted 'High' water quality status (Q4-5, Q5).

#### Local Importance (lower value):

- Sites containing small areas of semi-natural habitat that are of some local importance for wildlife.
- Sites or features containing non-native species that are of some importance in maintaining habitat links.
- Waterbodies with no current fisheries value, no significant potential fisheries value, poor fisheries habitat.