

WBP Wetlands Ecosystem Group

Guidance Note #1. High level objectives for the priority wetland habitat types:

Habitat coverage

The WBP Wetlands Ecosystem Group covers the following five priority habitats:

Lowland raised bog
Blanket bog (lowland examples only – the upland group covers the larger upland resource)
Lowland fen
Coastal & floodplain grazing marsh
Wet reedbeds

Generic high level objectives

1. Ensure no further loss of the wetland priority habitat resource.
2. Implement favourable management for the resource, ultimately leading to favourable condition where restoration management is needed or maintenance management where already in good condition.
3. Recreate the habitat resource in areas where it was formerly present, with an emphasis on (i) deep peat supporting highly modified vegetation such as conifers and improved grassland, (ii) locations adjacent to extant sites, (iii) locations where habitat recreation would contribute to improved connectivity between extant habitat blocks or related semi-natural habitats such as marshy grassland and wet woodland.
4. In so far as this supports biodiversity objectives, implement management consistent with natural processes – e.g. encouraging a range of successional states, restoring groundwater flow pathways severed by drainage, implementing hydrological restoration consistent with the key water supply mechanisms operating on sites.
5. Encouraging management/restoration at scales which enable development of natural processes is highly desirable – e.g. wetland landscapes with zones subject to natural riparian flooding and space for successional transitions to wet woodland. In practice, much management/restoration effort in Wales will necessarily focus on relatively small and often isolated sites.
6. Where species-specific measures are needed, integrate these with habitat actions as far as possible. Ensure section 42 species covered by generic habitat management actions are taken into account.
7. Where appropriate, integrate habitat maintenance, restoration and re-creation with the delivery of ecosystem services.
8. Target creation of new habitat at locations where this is likely to prove critical to improved habitat connectivity. In general in Wales – where much semi-natural habitat remains but often in poor condition and subject to unfavourable management, the emphasis should be on conserving/restoring surviving areas of habitat.
9. Take account of priority areas for wetland action defined by the Wetlands Ecosystem Group when prioritising sites for restoration/re-creation.

Pete Jones
Chair, Wetlands Ecosystem Group

1st Draft, 2 July 2013