Natural England

Conservation translocation project scoping form

When you are planning a conservation translocation in England, use this form:

* as a checklist of issues to consider
* to summarise the information you need to share with other people
* to record the project so that it can inform other projects
* to demonstrate good practice and compliance with the code and guidance

You need to submit this form to Natural England if your project needs a [conservation translocation licence](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reintroductions-and-conservation-translocations-in-england-code-guidance-and-forms/conservation-translocations-when-you-need-a-wildlife-licence) or consent for activities on a protected site. If your conservation translocation does not need a licence or consent, we still encourage you to use the project scoping form. But you do not need to submit the form to Natural England.

Use this form to understand whether there are:

* conservation benefits
* socioeconomic benefits
* any legislative constraints and risks

The level of detail you include should be proportionate to the scale of the proposed translocation and the level of risk.

By scoring your project as low, medium or high for risks and benefits, you can identify and understand the scope of legal constraints and the risks associated with your proposed translocation. This will help you plan your project. If you have a mix of low, medium and high scores, the highest scores will define the recommended level of planning needed.

Read the [reintroductions and other conservation translocations code and guidance for England](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reintroductions-and-conservation-translocations-in-england-code-guidance-and-forms) to find out more about scoping your project.

Send your completed form to: [wildlife.scicons@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:wildlife.scicons@naturalengland.org.uk)

**Contents**

[1 Conservation and socio-economic benefits 2](#_Toc72157211)

[2 Legislative issues 4](#_Toc72157212)

[3 Biodiversity risks 6](#_Toc72157213)

[4 Socio-economic risks 9](#_Toc72157214)

[5 Review and decide whether to continue 11](#_Toc72157215)

# Conservation and socio-economic benefits

Your project should aim to achieve a conservation benefit. Those benefits may be to the species being translocated or to its habitat or ecosystem. There may also be socio-economic benefits to individuals or society.

Complete the tables to show the types and levels of benefit:

* low value benefits make little difference to the conservation status of the species, habitats or ecosystems
* medium value benefits bring some gains, such as improving the local or regional conservation status of a species or habitat, or socio-economic benefit to a small number of individuals
* high value benefits improve the national or international conservation status of a species or habitat (indicate which applies) or bring appreciable socio-economic benefits to communities or wider groups of society (indicate who benefits)

## Focal species: Reduce the extinction risk or improve the conservation status of a species by:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Benefit type** | **Low benefit** | **Medium benefit** | **High benefit** |
| Increasing the number of individuals, improving population structure, or increasing the number of locations at which a species occurs. |  |  |  |
| Improving the genetic health and resilience of a population. |  |  |  |
| Establishing ‘bridging populations’, to facilitate migration or gene flow. |  |  |  |
| Establishing populations in areas where the species will experience reduced levels of threat (for example, moving organisms into more suitable ‘climate space’, disease-free areas or locations with suitable management). |  |  |  |

## Habitat or ecosystem: Improve the conservation status of an ecosystem, habitat or other species by:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Benefit type** | **Low benefit** | **Medium benefit** | **High benefit** |
| Increasing habitat quality (for example, translocating species to change grazing regimes). |  |  |  |
| Improving ecosystem services and functions (for example, translocating species to provide pollinator services). |  |  |  |

## People: Socio-economic benefits as a result of:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Benefit type** | **Low benefit** | **Medium benefit** | **High benefit** |
| Enriching human experiences and environmental awareness due to increased contact with biodiversity. |  |  |  |
| Increasing benefits to humans from ecosystem services (for example, pollination). |  |  |  |
| Increasing income (for example, revenue from ecotourism where the translocated species leads to increased visits or spend). |  |  |  |

### Describe who benefits:

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Legislative issues

Select the degree of constraint:

* low and medium constraints should involve consultation with Natural England or other relevant bodies, such as the Environment Agency or Marine Management Organisation
* high constraints are covered by formal legislation

If you identify medium or high risks, you need to provide more details to describe the relevant issues for your translocation.

Use chapter 5 of the code and guidance to help.

## Translocated species

Low: No formal species protection.

Medium: [Priority species listed on section 41](http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4958719460769792).

High: Protected species that you need a licence to take from the wild or to possess. [Species listed on Schedule 9 of the 1981 Act](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69/schedule/9) or is not ordinarily resident in Great Britain – for which a licence to release into the wild is required. All freshwater fish species.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Release site (current)

Low: No formal conservation protection – landowner permission must be sought.

Medium: Release site is (or is in proximity to) a national park, important plant area, local nature reserve, area of outstanding natural beauty or similar.

High: Release site is (or is in proximity to) a site of special scientific interest, special area of conservation, special protection area, national nature reserve, Ramsar site; is in the marine area; is outside the natural range of focal species; contains protected species that may be affected by the translocation.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Release site (post-release)

Low: No change likely.

Medium: Establishment of the translocated species may result in legal protection being applied to some specific places (for example, its breeding sites or resting places) that may impact on its management (for example, may add hurdles to planning applications).

High: Establishment of the translocated species may result in site designation.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Donor population site

Low: No formal conservation protection – landowner permission should be sought.

Medium: Source population is located in a national park, important plant area, local nature reserve, area of outstanding natural beauty or similar.

High: Source population is located in a site of special scientific interest, special area of conservation, special protection area, national nature reserve or Ramsar site. Source population is from another country.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Animal welfare

Low: No legislative welfare protection (for example, invertebrates).

Medium: Handling and movement of vertebrates.

High: Actions that may cause harm to vertebrates as defined by Animal Welfare Act 2006. Find out [what the Animal Welfare Act 2006 means for wildlife](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/wildlife-management-advice-notice-the-animal-welfare-act-2006-wml-gu02).

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Quarantine and biosecurity

Low: Local movements of species not covered by biosecurity legislation and not known to pose a biosecurity risk.

Medium: Any long-distance translocations. Any cases where there is the possibility (or uncertainty as to the possibility) of pest and pathogen transmission.

High: Species carry serious disease or biosecurity risks (for example, on list of notifiable diseases or restricted movement) or translocation across international borders.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Dangerous species

Low: Benign organisms.

Medium: Organisms that could potentially harm humans during the translocation process.

High: Animals listed by the [Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1976/38/schedule).

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Biodiversity risks

Select the risk attribute:

* no or low risk means you can self certify
* medium risk means you should consult with Natural England or other relevant bodies, such as the Environment Agency or Marine Management Organisation
* high risk means you need a detailed evaluation and specialist advice

If you identify medium or high risks, you need to provide more details to describe the relevant issues for your translocation.

Use chapter 7 of the code and guidance to help.

## Distance of the translocation

No or low risk: Local movement (for example, within local authority area), typically covering distances that are within dispersal potential for the species under ideal habitat conditions.

Medium risk: Regional movement, for example between major regions within England.

High risk: National or international movement. This applies outside England, but particular attention will be given to translocations from outside Great Britain.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Threat to the donor population

No or low risk: Source population is one of many that is large in size and removing organisms for the translocation will have no discernible effect.

Medium risk: Organisms are sourced from moderately sized populations of species of conservation importance, or from one of only very few remaining large populations.

High risk: All potential source populations are small in size and removing organisms may have a direct and measurable impact on the remaining population.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Establishment following the translocation may cause loss or reduction of important habitat

No or low risk: Very unlikely (for example, most bryophytes).

Medium risk: May result in moderate changes in species composition (for example, some small generalist herbivores).

High risk: May lead to clearly recognisable impacts and major habitat change (for example, some large herbivores and generalist predators).

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Establishment may cause loss or reduction of important species

No or low risk: Very unlikely (for example, most bryophytes).

Medium risk: May lead to impacts on vulnerable species (for example, scrub restoration may negatively impact on an existing ground flora).

High risk: May lead to clearly recognisable impacts or loss of other species (for example, predators).

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Translocation may spread pests and diseases

No or low risk: No known significant problems.

Medium risk: Known to suffer significantly from native pathogens and pests (for example, hedgehog).

High risk: Known to suffer from pathogens and pests that pose significant threats to populations of the same and related species (for example, amphibians and chytrid fungi, or badger and bovine tuberculosis). Translocations of aquatic species. Recognised risk that translocation activity could spread pathogens to other species.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Hybridisation threat (intra-specific races or inter-specific)

No or low risk: No known problems (for example, translocating individuals of a self-pollinating plant species which does not hybridise with other species of conservation concern).

Medium risk: Potential for significantly increased hybridisation with uncommon species or translocation involves mixing populations that have been separated for a long time and so may lead to genetic incompatibilities.

High risk: Known to hybridise with economically important species, or species of conservation concern, that occur at (or close to) the release site (for example, salmonids).

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Species is likely to spread beyond the confines of the release site

No or low risk: Poorly dispersed and likely to be contained within the confines of the release site.

Medium risk: Species has potential for effective spread beyond the release sites but has no potential to cause further conflicts.

High risk: Species has potential for effective spread beyond the release sites and has the potential to cause conflicts (for example, is known to be invasive in other places).

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Potential for animal welfare concerns to released animals or those they interact with

No or low risk: No concerns due to perceived lack of sentience (for example, plants).

Medium risk: Moderate concern (for example, invertebrates) or general concerns associated with handling and movement.

High risk: Significant (vertebrates), especially where actions may cause harm (for example, improper or inappropriate transit cases for vertebrates).

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Socio-economic risks

Select the risk attribute:

* no or low risk means you can self certify
* medium risk means you should consult with Natural England or other relevant bodies, such as the Environment Agency or Marine Management Organisation
* high risk means you need a detailed evaluation and specialist advice

If you identify medium or high risks, you need to provide more details to describe the relevant issues for your translocation.

Use chapter 8 of the code and guidance to help.

## Likelihood of strong social resistance by some to translocation

No or low risk: Unlikely.

Medium risk: Some minor concerns (for example, otter – potential impacts on fisheries).

High risk: Likely to cause major opposition from some groups (for example, predators being released near commercially important species).

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Harm to human health and well-being

No or low risk: No known risks to human health.

Medium risk: Presents a minor risk to human health (for example, stings, irritation) or rare occurrence of serious impact.

High risk: Presents a potential risk to human health. For example, serious illness or injury (large carnivore or vector for harmful pathogen).

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Harm to human livelihoods

No or low risk: Unlikely.

Medium risk: Small scale impacts on pets and livestock.

High risk: Significant concern (for example, killing livestock, harming populations of commercially important species, restricting access to commercially important sites).

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Insufficient resources prevent successful implementation of the plan

No or low risk: Translocation is low cost.

Medium risk: Translocation is expensive but well resourced.

High risk: The translocation may run over multiple years making it difficult to guarantee funding and a shortfall may lead to animal welfare issues or inadequate management (resulting in negative conservation outcomes or socio-economic problems).

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Major financial costs once the translocation has been completed

No or low risk: Unlikely.

Medium risk: There is a concern that the translocation may have impacts that require ongoing management.

High risk: There is a possibility of a very expensive and large scale reversal programme if the translocation has adverse outcomes.

|  |
| --- |
|  |

# Review and decide whether to continue

After completing this form, you need to review the scale of benefits and the level of risk from your project and decide whether to continue planning the conservation translocation.

## Proceed with a conservation translocation

You can proceed if all the following apply:

* there are clear conservation benefits to the translocation
* you can meet the legislative requirements
* you can minimise the risks

To continue, you should follow the [code and good practice guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reintroductions-and-conservation-translocations-in-england-code-guidance-and-forms) to plan your project and, if needed, [apply for a wildlife licence](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reintroductions-and-conservation-translocations-in-england-code-guidance-and-forms/conservation-translocations-when-you-need-a-wildlife-licence).

## Do not proceed with a conservation translocation

Do not proceed if any of the following apply:

* there are no conservation benefits
* you cannot meet the legislative requirements
* the risks are too high

In this case, you should look at alternative options to address the conservation issue.

May 2021