

England Species Reintroductions Taskforce

Date and time: Thursday 25 September 2025, 09:00-13:00

Venue: Ennerdale Country House Hotel, Main Street, Cleator, Cumbria, CA23 3DT

Attendees: Andy Clements (Chair), Sarah Dalrymple, Geoff Hilton, Delphine Pouget, Karim Vahed, George Holmes, Rachel Gardner, Mike Fay, Julia Touza, Will Stinson, John Ewen, Ben McCarthy, Andrew Stringer, Jeremy Sabel (Secretariat)

Online: Mike Shurmer, Jake Fiennes

Guests: In person: Mike Dunn (Forestry England), Jenny Williams, Clare Pinches & James Hoggett (Natural England); Online: Cat Barlow (Restoring Upland Nature), Martin Gaywood (NatureScot & University of the Highlands and Islands), Catherine Whatley & Kat O'Brien (NatureScot)

Apologies: Jenny MacPherson, Martin Lines, Beth Brockett (Forest Research), Isabelle Cardinal (Natural England)

Minutes

1. Welcome from the Chair

Andy Clements welcomed attendees to the meeting.

2. Minutes and actions from last meeting

Andy Clements asked members to confirm their acceptance of the previous minutes, noting that the agreed actions formed substantive items for this meeting's agenda.

3. Sub-group updates

Andy Clements invited members to give updates on the following activities:

3.1 Barriers and enablers

Andy Clements informed the Taskforce that the barriers and enablers report has been finalised. The report and policy brief will be published soon as well as a journal article in due course.

3.2 Conservation introductions framework

Sarah Dalrymple informed the Taskforce that the second phase of this work is going through procurement. Her research group at Liverpool John Moore's University will be working on this and will report before the end of March 2026. This workstream is a collaboration between the Taskforce and the Scottish National Species Reintroductions Forum (NSRF).

3.3 Database

Jeremy Sabel updated the Taskforce that Phase 2 of database development will be carried out by the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology. The database will establish data flows to other platforms (e.g. iRecord, NBN Atlas and GBIF) and other databases e.g. Transloc (if possible). This will include stakeholder consultation and user-testing by a key working group including the Taskforce, Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, NatureScot, NSRF, Plantlife, British Association of Zoos and Aquariums (BIAZA) and European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA). The database will be completed before the end of March 2026. This workstream is also a collaboration between the Taskforce and the NSRF.

3.4 Online hub

Martin Gaywood (University of the Highlands and Islands) presented his proposal to create a Scottish online hub for conservation translocation guidance involving extensive stakeholder engagement. The Taskforce was impressed with the detailed plans and decided to continue discussions about widening the scope and collaborating on a UK wide online hub.

3.5 Contribution of conservation translocations to biodiversity targets

Delphine Pouget updated the Taskforce that the scope of this commission has been finalised and will go out to the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning services (MEL) contract Defra and NE are signed up to and report back before the end of March 2026.

3.6 Rapid review of guidance and guidelines

Delphine Pouget updated the Taskforce to say that the Evidence Synthesis team in Natural England will be carrying out a rapid review of conservation introductions guidance across the UK and beyond and mapping this. Phase 1 will report by the end of March 2026.

3.7 Stakeholder's network

Delphine Pouget reported on the first meeting of the steering group held on 22.09.25 following an initial meeting of c. 40 stakeholders on 27.02.25 at ZSL London Zoo. Steering group members agreed to continue to meet, to develop terms of reference and explore how a stakeholder network would operate (including whether a face-to-face meeting could be organised for early 2026).

3.8 Decision-making tools

John Ewen presented the evolution of this project which aims to help practitioners make informed decisions about conservation translocations. This can be a collaboration with the IUCN. Members of the Taskforce were keen to see the development of interactive tools online as well as opportunities for in person training and online videos.

Actions

- Finalise barriers and enablers report, policy brief and seek publication of a peer reviewed paper (GH, Filippo Marino, DP, AC and JS)
- Finalise the predator guild report, seek publication of a peer reviewed paper, create a one page summary for a wider audience/blog (JT, AS, RG, AC, JS)
- Sign a Memorandum of Agreement with NatureScot for collaboration and joint funding of database and conservation introductions workstreams (JS, DP, Martin Gaywood)
- Procure conservation introductions framework (JS)
- Procure conservation translocations database (JS)
- Continue discussions about UK wide online hub with Martin Gaywood (AC, DP, JS)
- Procure research into the contribution of conservation translocations to biodiversity targets (DP)
- Meet regularly with the evidence synthesis team conducting the rapid review into conservation translocations guidance (AC, DP, JS, SD, JE)
- Put together terms of reference for the stakeholder network (DP)
- Develop scope of decision-making tools according to feedback from the Taskforce (JE)
- Publish priorities and workplan on .gov.uk (DP/JS)
- Subscribe to AER to enable the Taskforce to publish reports (JS)

4. [ACCESS | Home](#) What is ACCESS about ACCESS | Nature Recovery Task Force

James Hoggett presented the findings of the ACCESS Task Force and led the England Species Reintroductions Taskforce through an interactive session on perceptions and motivations behind conservation translocations.

5. Social feasibility best practice

Mike Dunn presented best practice in social feasibility and engagement.

6. Restoring Upland Nature

Cat Barlow spoke to the Taskforce about the [South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project](#), the factors that have contributed to its success and the lessons learned.

7. Budget

Delphine Pouget presented the current state of the budget. There is a projected underspend and the Taskforce were asked to identify other work that could be completed before the end of the financial year with reference to previously identified priorities. Sarah Dalrymple suggested a rapid review of how terms such as 'native', 'natural' and 'historical range' are defined or used.

Action:

- Develop possible workstream reviewing terms such as native, historical range and synonyms (All)
- Suggest any other workstreams that might be taken forward (All)

6. Taskforce futures

Members agreed that Will Stinson (Defra) should become a full member of the Taskforce. All current members have agreed to a second term on the Taskforce. Andy Clements stated that the terms of reference will be updated to make sure that membership of the Taskforce is refreshed regularly going forward.

Actions carried forward from last meeting:

- Update terms of reference (AC, DP, JS)
- Add Will Stinson as member of Taskforce (JS)

7. Member updates

- Amphibian and reptile conservation (ARC) published a [national strategy for adder conservation translocations](#) in September 2025
- The last meeting of the [The National Estate for Nature Group - GOV.UK](#) focussed on 30x30 and we could explore how species conservation translocations can play a part.
- Aviva's Nature Coalition is funding a series of initiatives and the Taskforce could explore how to feed in.

Dates and location for next meeting: Thursday 20th November, Holkham Hall, Norfolk