Evaluation of the Compliance and Quality of Biodiversity Duty Reports 2015

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Evaluation of the Compliance and Quality of Biodiversity Duty Reports 2015

Final Report

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 places a duty on all public bodies in Scotland, requiring them to further the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their activities. Biodiversity can be defined as the variety of life on Earth and covers the genetic materials within the different species of animals and plants, the species themselves, and the communities they make up (SNH, 2011).

As set out by the Wildlife and Natural Environment (WANE) Act 2011, public bodies must also publish a report on their compliance with the biodiversity duty every three years. The first reports under the WANE Act were due on 1st January 2015. Following this date, the Scottish Government commissioned a study to evaluate the compliance and quality of this initial round of biodiversity duty reports.

Aims and objectives

The aim of the study was to assess biodiversity duty reporting by public bodies and the activities undertaken to meet the duty. In particular, the study aimed to:

- Assess what approaches had been employed in public body reporting;

- Provide an overview of the biodiversity activities reported;

- Assess the contribution that the activities were making to delivery of the '2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity'[1] (the biodiversity strategy), the Six Big Steps for Nature outlined in 'Scotland's Biodiversity – a Route Map to 2020'[2] and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets (from the UN Convention on Biological Diversity[3]); and

- Identify the lessons to be learned for the next round of reporting in 2018. This included producing a guidance document and revising the reporting template (originally developed by the LBAP officer network).

Methods

The study used three main approaches to gather information, including:

1. **A review of biodiversity duty reports**: 56 reports were identified and reviewed for their content, style, format and the activities reported;

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[1] Scottish Government (2013): 2020 Challenge for Scotland's biodiversity: A strategy for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Scotland, Edinburgh, Scottish Government.

[2] Scottish Government (2015): Scotland's biodiversity: a route map to 2020, Edinburgh, Scottish Government.

[3] The Aichi Biodiversity Targets can be accessed at: https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/

2. **An internet based survey** of all the public bodies that were believed to be in existence between 2012 and 2014 and so should have published a biodiversity report by January 2015: 81 out of 139 eligible public bodies responded to the survey, giving an overall response rate of 58%; and

3. **Telephone interviews** with public bodies that had published a report and those that had not. Eleven interviews were held, with all interviewees being asked about actions the Scottish Government could take to assist with reporting.

All information obtained was brought together and analysed to answer the research questions. Comments and opinions from public bodies were used to produce the guidance, refine the reporting template and develop policy recommendations.

Findings

Internet research and the survey responses indicated that 61 biodiversity duty reports had been produced. This total represents 44% of the 139 public bodies believed to have been in existence during the reporting period. According to the survey responses, 35 public bodies (25%) did not publish a report. The remaining 43 public bodies (31%) may have produced a report, but they did not respond to the survey and no report has been identified on the internet.

Of the 61 reports produced, 56 were identified and reviewed; the study team was not able to obtain the remaining five reports[4]. The review determined that 42 reports (75%) were standalone documents whilst 14 (25%) were published as part of another document. Two thirds of the reports (37 or 66%) appeared to use or partially use the reporting template. The most commonly included section was on actions, with 44 reviewed reports (79%) providing information on specific biodiversity actions. Actions reported included practical actions, communications work and supporting activities, such as encouraging staff members to take part in biodiversity related volunteering. Where public bodies felt that they had limited scope to undertake biodiversity actions, they generally reported sustainability actions. These included waste reduction, carbon and water use, and sustainable procurement.

There are two characteristics that affect the range of biodiversity related activities that a public body could carry out. These include (1) whether a public body owns or is responsible for land; and (2) whether a public body's main responsibilities involve biodiversity. The reviewed reports indicate that the activities recorded were contributing to all 20 of the key steps from the biodiversity strategy that were likely to be relevant to some or a majority of public bodies. This is despite the fact that the assessment is underestimating the contribution of public bodies to biodiversity because not all activities will have been reported, and it has not been possible to

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[4] One public body did not respond when contacted, three indicated in the survey that they did not wish to be contacted further, and one stated that the report was not publicly available.

assess every reported activity against each key step. Since the key steps were linked to the Six Big Steps for Nature and the Aichi Targets, the study has also determined that public bodies' activities are contributing to all Six Big Steps for Nature as well as 12 of the 20 Aichi Targets. The eight Aichi Targets, to which the reviewed reports do not appear to contribute, include those aimed more at policy and decision making by national governments[5] or their departments, and targets relating to specialist knowledge or specific ecosystems which are not relevant to the majority of Scottish public bodies.

Several reasons were cited where public bodies did not produce a report. These included a lack of awareness of the need to report, a belief that the biodiversity duty was not relevant to them and a general fatigue in relation to reporting with this being seen as a box ticking exercise. Other factors affecting reporting included the individual responsible for reporting leaving the organisation, the prioritisation of work against the organisation's core functions (with biodiversity not seen as one of these) and fear/uncertainty relating to the reporting requirement. Public bodies that produced biodiversity duty reports were interested in receiving feedback from the Scottish Government. They also raised concerns about financial constraints and a lack of resources having the potential to affect their ability to report in the future.

Conclusions and policy recommendations

Many public bodies have carried out biodiversity actions and reported on them as required by the WANE Act. Other organisations have not produced a report for various reasons. A third group of organisations may have produced a report, but they did not respond to the survey and no report has been located.

Whilst the engagement work undertaken as part of this study is likely to have raised the profile of biodiversity duty reporting, there are still several actions that the Scottish Government could take to facilitate and encourage future reporting. As suggested by public bodies, these could include further awareness raising (in particular, greater communication with public bodies), the provision of advice and guidance on both potential biodiversity activities and report production, and the provision of feedback when reports are submitted.

Drawing on the findings, this study has developed six specific policy recommendations as follows:

1. The Scottish Government should publish the biodiversity duty reports on their own website (rather than including a link to another organisation's website).

2. The Scottish Government should acknowledge receipt of all report links/reports from public bodies.

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[5] It is noted that some of these targets may be relevant to the Scottish Government's biodiversity related activities.

3. Biodiversity duty reports should be added to the list of documents on the Model Publication Scheme. This scheme is operated by the Information Commissioner and helps public bodies to identify what they need to publish.

4. The Scottish Government should raise awareness amongst the general public of the requirement to carry out biodiversity activities and report on them (e.g. by issuing bulletins to the news page of the Scottish Government website around reporting time).

5. The Scottish Government should improve communication with public bodies about the biodiversity duty, in particular, by providing them with an annual update to ensure that biodiversity remains on each organisation's agenda every year. Reminder emails could also be sent out two to three months before reports are due.

6. The Scottish Government should publish guidance on the reporting process that includes examples of reports and activities from different types of public body. This guidance should be updated for future reporting rounds as good practice develops.

Contents

1 Introduction

This chapter provides an introduction to the study. It highlights the two pieces of legislation that are relevant to biodiversity duty reporting, namely the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 and the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011. It also outlines the main documents that are guiding the conservation of biodiversity in Scotland. These include Scotland's Biodiversity Strategy, the 2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity, and Scotland's Biodiversity: a Route Map to 2020 which contains the Six Big Steps for Nature. The chapter then notes that the first biodiversity duty reports were due in January 2015. There is a need to assess these reports, the activities carried out, and the contribution made by public bodies to Scotland's biodiversity targets. The chapter presents the overall aim of the study, which was to assess biodiversity duty reporting by public bodies and the activities undertaken. The more detailed objectives are also included. The chapter concludes with information on the structure of this report.

1.1 Policy context

The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 requires all public bodies in Scotland to further the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their activities[6]. This requirement is referred to as the biodiversity duty. Biodiversity can be defined as the variety of life on Earth and covers the genetic materials within the different species of animals and plants, the species themselves, and the communities they make up (SNH, 2011). The biodiversity duty aims to help connect people and their environment (SNH, 2011).

Following on from the 2004 Act, Part 5 of the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 (the WANE Act) requires public bodies in Scotland to prepare a report on compliance with their biodiversity duty[7]. Each public body should publish a report on the actions taken to meet their biodiversity duty every three years. Public bodies can prepare these reports in any form they think fit, with the legislation noting that biodiversity duty reports may be included within other reports that the public body is preparing or publishing. The WANE Act came into force in January 2012.

Two key biodiversity documents have been published since this date. In 2013, the Scottish Government published the biodiversity strategy entitled "2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity" (Scottish Government, 2013). This document is Scotland's response to the Aichi targets and has three main aims including:

- Maximising the benefits of a diverse natural environment;

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[6] See Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004, accessed at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2004/6/contents on 23rd September 2016.

[7] See Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011, accessed at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2011/6/contents/enacted on 23rd September 2016.

- Engaging people with the natural world; and
- Supporting biodiversity and ecosystems.

These aims are broken down into a series of key outcomes covered by the various chapters of the strategy. Each of the outcomes is supported by a list of key steps which can be linked to different pressures affecting biodiversity, as well as the Aichi Targets.

In 2015, the Scottish Government published the route map "Scotland's biodiversity – a route map to 2020" (Scottish Government, 2015). This included the Six Big Steps for Nature, along with a set of priority projects under each of these steps. The steps cover:

1. Ecosystem restoration;

2. Investment in natural capital;

3. Quality greenspace for health and education benefits;

4. Conserving wildlife in Scotland;

5. Sustainable management of land and freshwater; and

6. Sustainable management of marine and coastal ecosystems.

The biodiversity duty, as specified by the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act, will help ensure that public bodies consider biodiversity when carrying out their everyday activities. It will enable them to contribute towards the aims of the biodiversity strategy, as well as the Six Big Steps for Nature in the route map. The WANE Act provides the mechanism for ensuring that public bodies publish information on their activities relating to biodiversity.

The first biodiversity duty reports were due in January 2015, three years from when the WANE Act came into force. All public bodies that were established prior to January 2012 were expected to report in 2015[8]. Whilst the WANE Act does not require public bodies to tell the Scottish Government that they have published a report, 36 public bodies had notified the Scottish Government of their reports by 1st January 2015. However, 139 public bodies were in existence within Scotland in 2012[9]. There was a need to evaluate this first round of biodiversity duty reporting to determine how many public bodies had published reports. Other issues to investigate included:

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[8] Note that public bodies that were formed after this date should publish their first biodiversity duty report within three years of their establishment.

[9] Drawing on the Scottish Government's National Public Bodies Directory (http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Government/public-bodies/about/Bodies), this study identified 139 public bodies as being in existence in Scotland in 2012. This total counts the six Justices of the Peace Advisory Committees as one public body.

- The different approaches to reporting. The Scottish LBAP (Local Biodiversity Action Plan) officer network produced a template and guidance for reporting. Public bodies could use this template if they wished, or develop their own;

- The types of activities reported by public bodies when carrying out their biodiversity duty. Different public bodies are likely to be able to carry out different activities;

- The contribution that these activities are likely to be making to Scotland's biodiversity targets; and

- Any lessons learnt that can be carried forward to the next reporting round in 2018.

The Scottish Government therefore commissioned this study to assess the first round of biodiversity duty reporting as required by the WANE Act.

1.2 Aims and objectives

1.2.1 Study aim

The aim of this study was to assess biodiversity duty reporting by public bodies and the activities undertaken.

1.2.2 Objectives

The research objectives were:

1. To identify, compare and contrast the reports that public bodies used to fulfil their biodiversity reporting duty.

2. To provide an assessment of the contribution that the biodiversity duty is making to the delivery of the "2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity". This assessment could include the biodiversity duty activities in the context of / contribution to a) the Six Big Steps for Nature, and b) Aichi Targets.

3. To assess why some public bodies failed to submit a report and identify any actions that the Scottish Government can take to assist them in the future.

4. To draw conclusions and recommendations on requirements for future reporting, through provision of improved guidance and instructions and development of the next reporting template. These should take into account 'Scotland's Biodiversity – a Route Map to 2020'.

1.3 Structure of this report

This report provides:

- An introduction to the study (this chapter) providing the policy context and the aims and objectives;

- A description of the method followed;

- Key findings from the desk research, the internet based survey of public bodies and the telephone interviews; and

- Conclusions and policy recommendations.

Additional information is included within the annexes as follows:

- Annex 1: Evaluation matrix;
- Annex 2: Identified biodiversity duty reports (2012-2014);
- Annex 3: Internet based survey;
- Annex 4: Scottish public bodies (based on the National Public Bodies Directory);
- Annex 5: Interview questions;
- Annex 6: Relevance of the key steps in the "2020 challenge for Scotland's biodiversity";
- Annex 7: Contribution of public body activities to relevant key steps from the biodiversity strategy; and
- Annex 8: Linking relevant key steps from the biodiversity strategy to the Six Big Steps for nature and the Aichi targets.

2 Method

This chapter outlines the approach taken to the study, providing a list of the tasks carried out alongside more detailed information on particular activities. These included desk based research such as developing the evaluation matrix to provide the structure for the evaluation, reviewing the identified biodiversity duty reports, organising an internet based survey of public bodies, and holding telephone interviews with a sample of public bodies. The chapter also describes the approach taken to identifying key steps from the biodiversity strategy that are relevant to public bodies and subsequently matching activities reported by public bodies to these steps. The assumptions, limitations and caveats relating to the method are also discussed. Limitations relate to identifying all the relevant public bodies and appropriate contact details, whilst caveats include the classification of public bodies, and the receipt of multiple survey responses from the same public body. The chapter also notes that for a number of reasons, this study is likely to have underestimated the contribution made by public bodies towards the key steps in Scotland's biodiversity strategy.

2.1 Overview

The approach to the study combined desk based research (e.g. searching for published biodiversity duty reports) with public body consultation through an internet based survey and telephone interviews. The following sections provide more detail on the method followed as well as the assumptions, limitations and caveats.

2.2 Approach

2.2.1 Outline of tasks

The study was broken down into six tasks including:

- Task 1: project initiation and inception meeting;
- Task 2: evaluating reports published by public bodies. This included developing an evaluation matrix, reviewing the reports against the evaluation questions, and identifying good practice in terms of reporting and activities carried out. It also involved engagement with public bodies including an internet based survey of public bodies and telephone interviews;
- Task 3: identifying why reports were not submitted and how the template and guidance could be improved. This task drew on the responses from the internet survey as well as the telephone interviews;
- Task 4: assessing the contribution of the biodiversity duty towards the delivery of the '2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity';
- Task 5: producing and testing the revised template and guidance; and
- Task 6: reporting and presenting the findings.

The study outputs include a final report, a research summary, a guidance document and a revised template.

Further information on the main activities carried out as part of the above tasks is provided below.

2.2.2 Developing the evaluation matrix (part of Task 2)

The evaluation matrix provided the framework for the evaluation. It set out the areas to be covered, the evaluation questions, the types of data required to answer these questions (the indicators) and the information sources for the data. The evaluation matrix was developed from the version initially produced for the study proposal, taking into account the aims and objectives as well as the issues discussed at the start-up meeting. The final version of the matrix can be found in Annex 1.

2.2.3 Reviewing identified biodiversity duty reports (part of Task 2)

A spreadsheet was set up to record information from the review of the published biodiversity reports. Part of the structure of the spreadsheet aligned with the biodiversity duty reporting template as developed by the LBAP officer network[10]. It included space to record examples of the various biodiversity related activities undertaken by public bodies.

This study identified 53 biodiversity duty reports from internet research. An additional three reports were made known to the study team through links provided by public bodies in the online survey. All 56 reports were reviewed, with their details recorded in the spreadsheet (Annex 2 lists the 56 reports identified).

The published reports were also reviewed for good practice in terms of (1) the activities reported and (2) their reporting structure and style.

To identify best practice activities, the reviewed reports were first categorised by type of public body (e.g. local authority, executive non-departmental public body). Several activities were then identified from each group of reports according to whether they were replicable (i.e. other public bodies in different locations could implement them) and had direct links to, and benefits for, biodiversity. It was not possible to consider biodiversity outcomes when selecting best practice examples since this is the first round of biodiversity duty reporting, so most reports did not provide any information on the results of implementing activities. It is anticipated that such information will be more readily available in future rounds. Grouping the reports by public body type ensured that a range of best practice activities were identified from public bodies with varying capabilities, resources and knowledge relating to biodiversity.

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[10] The template is available on the Biodiversity Scotland website, accessed at: http://www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk/duty/work/results/ on 23rd September 2016.

For structure and style, this process involved identifying the different ways in which information had been presented (e.g. tables, diagrams) as well as whether the report was easy to read and informative. Although a rather subjective process, this review provided useful information for the development of the guidance, in particular by providing public bodies with examples of how the report could be structured.

2.2.4 Internet based survey (part of Tasks 2 and 3)

An internet based survey was developed to enable all public bodies to provide their opinions on the biodiversity duty reporting process. The first batch of survey invites were sent out on 24th February 2016, with reminders issued on 14th March 2016. A second round of reminders was emailed on 23rd March 2016. The survey was closed on 4th April 2016, with 81 public bodies providing a response[11]. One additional response was received after the closure of the online survey, bringing the total number of responses to 82. However, a review of the comments provided by respondents indicated that one public body that had completed the survey was not actually in existence during the reporting period (2012-2014), and therefore did not have to provide a biodiversity duty report in January 2015. Excluding this public body and its response resulted in an overall response rate of 58% (81 responses out of 139 eligible public bodies).

The survey questions were designed to capture information on the biodiversity reports themselves (e.g. whether the report was standalone or part of another document), as well as the process (for example, whether the public body had written its own report or asked someone else to do it). The full set of survey questions are provided in Annex 3. Survey logic (e.g. automated question routing) was used to ensure that public bodies were only presented with questions relevant to their situation.

The Scottish Government's National Public Bodies Directory[12] was used as the starting point to identify public bodies to invite to complete the survey. Contact details for individuals were obtained from the internet where possible, or through telephoning the public body concerned. In total, this study determined that 139 public bodies were in existence between 2012 and 2014, and thus could be expected to have published a biodiversity duty report in 2015. The list of public bodies identified from the National Public Bodies Directory is provided as Annex 4.

The results of the survey are provided in the Section 3 (Key findings).

Emails were additionally sent to three newly formed public bodies to see if they had any views on the biodiversity duty reporting process. None of these organisations responded.

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[11] Note that where more than one response was received for any one public body, the responses were combined and counted as one response for the public body concerned.

[12] See the National Public Bodies Directory, accessed at: http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Government/public-bodies/about/Bodies on 23rd September 2016.

2.2.5 Interviews (part of Tasks 2 and 3)

The internet based survey included a question asking public bodies whether they would be willing to be contacted further to discuss biodiversity duty reporting. Of the survey responses received, 84% (68) indicated that they were happy to do so. Telephone interviews were held with a sample of these public bodies, including both those that had published a report and those that had not. In total, the study held 11 interviews.

The interviews were used to obtain more information on several areas, including:

- Good practice examples;
- Reasons why public bodies may not have published a biodiversity duty report; and
- Possible actions that the Scottish Government could take to assist public bodies with the production of reports in the future.

The interview questions are provided in Annex 5.

To obtain information on good practice examples, the study took a targeted approach to selecting individuals for interview. The public bodies that had published a report and were willing to be contacted further were matched to the good practice examples identified from the biodiversity reports. The public bodies were then classified by type, with invitations sent to five public bodies of different types with different example biodiversity actions. Where no response was received following a reminder email, additional public bodies were contacted. In total, five interviews were held with public bodies who had published a biodiversity duty report.

For public bodies who had not published a report, the study selected a random sample for interview. Six interviews were held with organisations which had not published a report.

2.2.6 Identifying relevant biodiversity targets (part of Task 4)

To assess the contribution that is being made by the biodiversity duty to delivery of the biodiversity strategy: 2020 Challenge for Scotland's biodiversity (Scottish Government, 2013), it was first necessary to identify the targets that are relevant to public bodies and their activities. Factors affecting a public body's ability to implement biodiversity related activities could include the amount of funding available, staffing levels and general awareness of biodiversity amongst staff. These factors could apply to any public body. However, there are two characteristics that are deemed to affect the range of biodiversity related activities that a public body could potentially carry out. These are:

- Whether the public body owns or is responsible for land and/or assets; and
- Whether the public body's main responsibilities are linked to or involve biodiversity.

Public bodies that own land, and whose main responsibilities are linked to or involve biodiversity, could potentially carry out a wider range of biodiversity related activities than those public bodies that do not. As an illustration, where a public body owns land it could ensure that the land was managed to provide suitable habitat for a particular species. This activity is not available to an organisation that does not own land or assets, irrespective of funding or staffing levels.

Table 2.1 provides a matrix that brings these two characteristics together. It illustrates that public bodies with land and whose main responsibilities are linked to biodiversity have the most opportunities in terms of being able to carry out a wide range of activities (subject to other constraints such as funding). In contrast, those public bodies that do not own land and whose main responsibilities do not relate to biodiversity have a smaller number of potential biodiversity related activities available to them.

This categorisation was used to help identify the biodiversity targets that may be relevant to the biodiversity duty. Public bodies with a small range of biodiversity activities available to them are expected to be able to contribute to fewer biodiversity targets than those public bodies that could potentially carry out many different types of activity.

Table 2.1: Matrix identifying how land ownership and main responsibilities affect the range of biodiversity related activities open to public bodies

| | | Ownership of land and/or assets | |
		Public body owns/is responsible for land and/or assets	Public body does not own/is not responsible for land and/or assets
Extent to which main responsibilities are linked to or involve biodiversity	Main responsibilities of public body are linked to/ involve biodiversity	Opportunity to carry out a wide range of activities for biodiversity	Opportunity to carry out a moderate range of activities for biodiversity
	Main responsibilities of public body are not linked to/do not involve biodiversity	Opportunity to carry out a moderate range of activities for biodiversity	Opportunity to carry out a small number of activities for biodiversity

Biodiversity targets that are likely to be relevant to some or all public bodies were identified from the biodiversity strategy: 2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity (Scottish Government, 2013). This strategy includes aims, outcomes and key steps which are linked to pressures affecting biodiversity. Annex 6 provides a list of the outcomes and key steps from the strategy. It then identifies the likely relevance of these key steps to public bodies in terms of whether public bodies are thought to have the opportunity to carry out activities that could contribute towards the step. Note that having the opportunity to carry out a relevant activity does not necessarily

mean that a public body has the required funding, staffing levels or awareness to do so.

Three classifications were used to categorise the key steps:

- Minority: a limited number of public bodies could directly contribute to this step;
- Some: a moderate proportion of public bodies could contribute to this step; and
- Majority/all: almost all public bodies (with exceptions) could contribute to this step in some way.

These classifications were not defined in terms of a number of public bodies, since this could have led to the omission of some key steps because they were deemed not to be relevant to an arbitrary number of public bodies. Instead, the assessment process was relatively subjective and involved thinking about each individual step in terms of:

- Location: for some of the steps, actions could be taken anywhere. In contrast, others require activities relating to a particular habitat type (e.g. peatland). Such steps will only be relevant to those public bodies which have access to the habitat type concerned.

- Whether any relevant national level policies/plans are already in place: for steps relating to national government policies and plans, national level action is likely to be required (e.g. establishing network of marine protected areas). These steps are assumed to be beyond the remit of the majority of public bodies.

- Whether the step required the application of a particular method: some steps may require the application of a particular specialist technique or approach. Such steps may only be relevant to a small number of public bodies.

This process resulted in the following classifications for the 32 key steps provided in the biodiversity strategy:

- 12 steps are thought to relate to a minority of public bodies;
- 12 steps are believed to be relevant to a moderate proportion of public bodies; and
- 8 steps are assumed to be relevant to the majority of public bodies.

Thus, for the purposes of this study, 20 key steps were thought to be relevant to the majority of public bodies (See Annex 6 for the individual classifications). Whilst the remaining 12 steps are not unimportant for biodiversity overall, this study focused on the steps to which a high number of public bodies could actually contribute. This ensures that the assessment of the contribution that the Biodiversity Duty is making to the delivery of the "2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity" (Scottish Government, 2013) provides results of interest to the majority of public bodies, and not just those who operate in particular locations or carry out specific functions.

2.2.7 Linking biodiversity targets (part of Task 4)

In addition to the key steps outlined in the biodiversity strategy, this study also needed to consider the contribution of the biodiversity duty to the Six Big Steps for nature outlined in the route map ("Scotland's biodiversity – a route map to 2020"; Scottish Government, 2015) and the Aichi targets from the Convention on Biological Diversity[13]. To facilitate this process, the Six Big Steps for nature and the Aichi targets were matched to the 20 steps identified from the biodiversity strategy as being relevant to a majority/all or some of the public bodies.

2.2.8 Matching biodiversity actions to biodiversity targets (part of Task 4)

To determine how the biodiversity duty was contributing to Scotland's biodiversity targets, the information extracted from each of the 56 reviewed biodiversity duty reports was compared with the relevant key steps identified from the biodiversity strategy. Activities undertaken by public bodies were matched to the key steps. It is important to note that given the level of detail available, this was a relatively subjective process. Therefore, to help ensure consistency in matching the activities to the key steps, one member of the project team undertook this task. Where an activity reported by a public body appeared to be relevant to one of the 20 key steps highlighted, this activity was deemed to be contributing towards the biodiversity strategy. It is possible that with more information, some of the activities might be reclassified as not contributing (or vice versa) to the steps. However, the nature of the analysis meant that a high level approach had to be followed when matching the activities to the key steps.

Since the key steps had already been linked to the Six Big Steps for nature (in "Scotland's biodiversity – a route map to 2020") and the Aichi targets, it was then possible to identify whether the reported activities were contributing to these targets as well.

2.2.9 Revising the template and producing the guidance (Task 5)

The process of revising the template began with the existing template (produced by the LBAP officer network). It took into account the suggestions made by respondents to the internet based survey as well as the points raised during the telephone interviews. It also considered the need for the next round of biodiversity duty reports to make reference to the route map published in 2015 ("Scotland's biodiversity – route map to 2020").

As discussed above when identifying relevant biodiversity targets, different public bodies have different levels of opportunity when considering the types of biodiversity activity they can undertake. The guidance needs to be appropriate and applicable to all public bodies, whatever their assets or level of knowledge about biodiversity. Therefore, when identifying good practice examples for inclusion within the guidance, care was taken to select examples from different types of public body.

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[13] The Aichi targets are available from the Convention on Biological Diversity internet site, accessed at: https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/ on 23rd September 2016.

During the telephone interviews, a small number of public bodies were asked if they were interested in reviewing or trialling the revised template. Several public bodies indicated that they were happy to look through the revised guidance and were sent a draft for comment after the first version had been reviewed by the Scottish Government. Five public bodies provided comments. These were taken into account when finalising the guidance.

2.3 Assumptions, limitations and caveats

2.3.1 Assumptions

This study relied on engagement with public bodies to provide much of the information required to feed into the analysis. The main assumptions when running the internet based survey were that public bodies were aware of the need to produce a biodiversity duty report and that they had an opinion on the reporting process itself. This may not necessarily have been the case for a variety of reasons, for example, the survey invite may have been sent to the incorrect individual or the person who produced the report may have left the organisation. However, it is assumed that a sufficient number of respondents would have been involved in the production of a biodiversity duty report and so would be able to provide informed opinions on the process followed.

A further assumption it is important to acknowledge relates to the biodiversity duty reports themselves. When searching for biodiversity duty reports, if an organisation included a section on biodiversity within their annual report or other document, this was taken to be the biodiversity duty report. This section may not actually have been written to meet the statutory requirement of the WANE Act. However, for the purposes of this study, we have included these reports within the evaluation to ensure we take all approaches to reporting into account and do not miss any potential good practice examples.

2.3.2 Limitations of the approach

The main limitations relating to the survey of public bodies included identifying the relevant public bodies and obtaining the email addresses of the most appropriate individuals.

This study attempted to identify and contact all public bodies that were in existence between 2012 and 2014 and thus should have submitted a report in January 2015. The Scottish Government's National Public Bodies Directory was used to help identify public bodies. However, this list relates to the tax year 2015-16, so might exclude organisations that were in existence prior to April 2015 but are no longer classified as public bodies. Furthermore, it includes new public bodies that were not established in 2012 and thus are not relevant for this round of biodiversity duty reporting. Internet research was undertaken to try and determine which public bodies were relevant. However, it cannot be guaranteed that all relevant public bodies have been contacted.

For some public bodies, contact details for named individuals are readily accessible on the internet. Other organisations only publicise a generic email address for all

enquiries. Where no email address or contact form was apparent, public bodies were telephoned to identify the most appropriate individual or department to whom the survey invite could be sent. Whilst it was not possible to telephone all the relevant public bodies due to time and resource constraints, efforts were made to ensure that the survey invites were directed to the correct department within an organisation. It should be acknowledged that not all public bodies contacted have biodiversity or environmental officers. In a few cases, it was difficult to identify the most appropriate individual or department for the survey invite.

2.3.3 Caveats when considering the findings

The main caveat is that the assessment undertaken by this study is likely to underestimate the contribution of the biodiversity duty to the delivery of Scotland's biodiversity strategy and other biodiversity targets (including the Six Big Steps for nature and the Aichi targets). Whilst the information provided in the existing biodiversity reports was screened against the key steps deemed as relevant from the biodiversity strategy, it should be remembered that:

- Time and resource constraints meant that it was not possible to go through each public body's report in detail and allocate all of their activities to a key step.
- Public bodies are unlikely to have reported all their biodiversity activities, since over a three year reporting period, these could be numerous.
- Public bodies which have not produced a biodiversity duty report may still have undertaken activities for biodiversity under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004.

Another caveat relates to the different types of public body (see Table 2.2 and Annex 4). The largest group is the executive non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs), followed by local authorities (note that public body types have been determined from the National Public Bodies Directory). The requirements of the WANE Act apply to all public bodies irrespective of their type or size. However, differences in the numbers of and response rates for the various public body types mean that care should be taken when analysing the results. Even if several public bodies appear to express the same viewpoint on an issue, it may not be appropriate to assume that this is the viewpoint of the majority. It could just be applicable to a particular type of public body. It should also be noted that public bodies may self-identify with a different category to the one to which they have been allocated in the table above (and on the Scottish Government website). Thus, the survey responses may indicate more or less of a particular type of public body than in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Types of public body

Type of public body	Number identified
Executive non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs)	33
Local authorities	32
Health bodies	23
Other significant national bodies	14
Executive agencies	7
Non-ministerial departments	7
Commissioners and ombudsmen	6
Public corporations	6
Tribunals	6
Advisory non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs)	5
All public bodies	**139**

Notes: table only includes those public bodies identified as being in existence between 2012 and 2014 (the three year reporting period) and thus expected to submit a biodiversity duty report in January 2015. The total of 139 counts the six Justices of the Peace Advisory Committees as one public body.

One further point to bear in mind when considering the survey responses is that there are a few cases where two public bodies work together and share their administration resources. The survey responses indicate that this is the situation for at least four Scottish public bodies (i.e. two separate incidences of shared administrative resources were identified). In these instances, it may be that the same individual or team effectively has the responsibility of producing the biodiversity duty report for two organisations. To help manage this issue, the survey asked respondents to state the name of the public body for whom they were responding. Including this question also ensured that any duplicate responses by the same public body could be combined. When calculating response rates, multiple responses for one public body have been counted as one response.

3 Key findings

This chapter provides the key findings from the various research activities including the review of identified biodiversity duty reports, matching the reported activities to the biodiversity targets, the internet based survey and the telephone interviews. The research carried out indicates that 44% of public bodies produced a biodiversity duty report for January 2015. In total, 56 reports were reviewed. The biodiversity activities reported by public bodies appeared to be contributing to all 20 of the key steps identified as relevant from the biodiversity strategy. Themes raised by the survey and interviews include confusion amongst some public bodies over what biodiversity is (with a few public bodies thinking that biodiversity duty reporting is not relevant to them) and a desire for more communication from the Scottish Government on the duty and the need to report. Public bodies are keen to see examples from other public bodies that have similar characteristics to them (i.e. in terms of having assets/land, and level of biodiversity knowledge). Concerns were also raised about seeing the duty as a box ticking exercise, and having the financial (and other) resources to be able to continue implementing activities and reporting upon them in the future. These points indicate that several of the lessons learnt from the review of the climate change duty report (Sustainable Scotland Network, 2016a) are also of relevance for biodiversity duty reporting.

3.1 Overview

This section presents the main themes and issues identified from the analysis. It also provides a summary of the findings from the desk research, including the internet based survey of public bodies and the telephone interviews.

3.2 Themes and issues identified

3.2.1 Overview

This section provides a summary of the key themes and issues resulting from the analysis of the findings. It brings together issues identified from the review of the published biodiversity duty reports, the survey, and the telephone interviews. It identifies points that are relevant for the development of the revised guidance and template, as well as wider issues associated with the biodiversity duty reporting process.

3.2.1 Reporting rates

Combining the totals from the survey responses and the internet research conducted for this study shows that 44% (61) of the 139 public bodies in Scotland have produced a report that outlines or addresses their responsibility towards

biodiversity conservation in the time period 2012-2014[14]. These reports may have been produced with the specific function of meeting the biodiversity duty reporting requirement or have been produced as part of another report and unintentionally met the reporting requirement.

The survey responses and internet research show that 25% (35) of the 139 public bodies have not produced a report that meets the biodiversity duty reporting requirement.

The remaining 31% (43) of the 139 public bodies may have produced a biodiversity duty report but there is no evidence to confirm this (i.e. they did not complete the online survey and a biodiversity duty report has not been found through online research). It could be that a report has been produced and published but is only available upon request or as a hard copy since the WANE Act only states that the report is to be published; it does not state that the report has to be available online. Without a response from these 44 public bodies it is not possible to confirm whether they have completed a biodiversity duty report or not.

3.2.2 Lack of awareness or confusion over what biodiversity actually is

In some of the biodiversity reports reviewed, there is a lot of information on sustainability, carbon emissions and management, but little mention of actions directly related to biodiversity. Evidence from the survey, and from talking to public bodies, suggests that in some cases this is because public bodies do not actually understand exactly what biodiversity is, and confuse biodiversity actions with those related to sustainability or reducing carbon emissions. It is acknowledged that sustainability actions can benefit biodiversity. For example, using environmentally friendly cleaning products minimises the impacts on aquatic species once these chemicals are washed down the drain. Decreasing water consumption can benefit aquatic habitats since it means that less water needs to be abstracted for human use. It is, however, important to note that to comply with the biodiversity duty, public bodies should report actions that have a direct impact on biodiversity. This suggests that the guidance document needs to provide basic background information on biodiversity, as well as example actions. This will ensure that public bodies have adequate information to both carry out their biodiversity duty (under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004) and report upon it (as per the WANE Act).

3.2.3 Belief that biodiversity is not relevant to the actions of the public body

Data from the survey indicated that one of the main barriers to biodiversity duty reporting during the first round was the perception by some public bodies that biodiversity focused actions were not applicable to the public body's role and thus there were no actions to report on. This barrier highlights two key issues: a) a lack of understanding with regard to how biodiversity links to the role and responsibility

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[14] Note that only 56 reports were reviewed during this study; the remaining five reports could not be located. Of the five, one public body did not respond when contacted, three indicated in the survey that they did not wish to be contacted further, and one stated that the report was not publicly available.

of each public body; and b) a lack of information on practical actions public bodies can undertake.

This later point was also highlighted in a 2010 Audit Scotland report when discussing the impact of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 on biodiversity. The report referred to a survey of public bodies undertaken by SNIFFER (2009) which identified that almost half of the survey respondents felt that they were unable to fulfil their biodiversity duty due to insufficient guidance being available. This would indicate that despite the development of resources such as the Biodiversity Scotland website[15], some public bodies are still struggling to find guidance and information that can help them meet their duty. This point has implications for the revised guidance in that it needs to be applicable to all public bodies, and not just include examples from those who have land and/or a biodiversity function/officer. This is reinforced by comments made during the telephone interviews. One consultee noted that they would be most interested in seeing example reports from organisations in similar situations, i.e. ones that were office based with little, if any, outside space. This would then help them to see what their organisation could actually do.

3.2.4 Lack of clarity over what biodiversity actions could be carried out

For some public bodies, there was a lack of clarity in terms of what they could (or indeed should) do for biodiversity. One survey response noted that there needed to be more information on what biodiversity actions were expected to ensure that the production of the biodiversity duty reports was more than a 'box ticking' exercise. Another noted that there needed to be guidance on what represented an acceptable level of activity under each heading (i.e. the different sections of the template).

This is perhaps an issue that is more relevant to the first round of biodiversity duty reports than later ones, since future reports will be able to draw on the range of activities presented in the reports already published. However, it does indicate that public bodies are looking for guidance on what activities to carry out and report upon.

3.2.5 Types of organisation reporting on staff volunteering

For local authorities, the reviewed biodiversity duty reports generally do not make any mention of staff volunteering. This is perhaps because local authorities have the capacity to carry out biodiversity activities as part of their day-to-day functions. They own land and are often actively involved in its management for biodiversity, sometimes with biodiversity focused organisations such as conservation charities. They also host events and workshops for the public, as well as run practical conservation days through their countryside ranger services. Thus, whilst their staff may carry out voluntary work, the local authorities have many other activities to highlight within their reports. Reporting on staff volunteering is perhaps more

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[15] See Biodiversity Scotland, accessed at: http://www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk/ on 23rd September 2016.

appropriate for organisations that do not own land or assets since this will be one of the few activities that they will be able to carry out. Thus, the revised guidance needs to bear in mind that different types of public bodies are likely to be able to undertake different activities. A range of examples is therefore required.

3.2.6 Feedback

Several survey respondents and interviewees have requested that feedback be provided to public bodies on their biodiversity duty reports. This issue links to the uncertainty felt by some public bodies in that they were not sure what the Scottish Government was expecting from them.

This point has perhaps been raised because public bodies are comparing the biodiversity duty reporting process with that for the annual climate change reports, where all the individual reports have been reviewed. For the climate change reporting, the format was fixed, with all public bodies having to complete an Excel spreadsheet. This is likely to have facilitated the process of reviewing and comparing the reports. It may also explain why some survey respondents have asked for a structured biodiversity duty reporting template for all public bodies to follow, since this would better enable comparisons between public bodies.

Whilst this study is not able to provide feedback to individual public bodies, it is hoped that the review of the reports as well as the online survey and telephone interviews will identify the most important issues relating to biodiversity duty reporting, and thus enable actions to be taken to provide more support and guidance to public bodies in the next round.

3.2.7 Financial implications of the biodiversity duty

Of the organisations that have produced a biodiversity duty report, several public bodies pointed out that financial constraints and a lack of staff resources are seen as future challenges. However, looking at the survey responses of those who have not published a report, lack of money is generally not viewed as a barrier (only two out of 35 highlighted budgetary constraints as one of the main reasons for not reporting). This could perhaps be because they are not aware of the funding and resources that might be needed to carry out biodiversity related activities. Alternatively, where organisations have implemented biodiversity actions and reported upon them, they may be more aware of the resource requirements, and hence see funding as an issue that could affect their ability to meet their biodiversity duty. This suggests that there may be a need for the revised guidance to highlight actions which could be carried out without considerable investment in terms of funding and staff resources. This might help ensure that organisations that have already published reports are able to continue to meet their biodiversity duty and report on it.

3.2.8 Communication about the biodiversity duty and the associated reports

Some public bodies have published biodiversity duty reports and so are clearly aware of the need to report under the WANE Act. There are other public bodies that are not aware of the requirement. The results from the internet survey suggest that there is actually a third group of public bodies that is aware of the Act but does

not fully understand the requirement in that they do not think it applies to them (for example, if their day-to-day activities are not related to biodiversity). This suggests that additional communication about the Act and its relevance to all public bodies may be needed.

3.2.9 Making it easier to find the published reports

During this study, extensive research was undertaken to identify as many biodiversity duty reports as possible. However, it may be the case that additional reports have been produced but have not been found by the study team. The need for all reports to be available from one location is a point that has been raised by several consultees[16]. This would both provide a resource base for public bodies wanting to identify additional biodiversity actions, and also serve to show which public bodies had produced a report. Indeed, in relation to this point, one survey respondent suggested publishing a list of public bodies along with a traffic light system to indicate whether or not they had met their biodiversity duty.

3.2.10   Meeting the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004

Initial analysis of the completed biodiversity duty reports has shown that although many evidence positive and constructive actions to improve biodiversity conservation, some are done simply to meet the requirement of producing a report and show little evidence of tangible actions and contribution towards meeting the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004. Indeed, it was commented by a consultee that an organisation could undertake minimal action and so meet the biodiversity duty without actually doing anything significant for biodiversity. A further respondent noted that having a duty to publish a report did not really help them protect biodiversity. More information and clarity were requested on what actions were actually expected.

It should be noted that the lack of detail in some reports may be due to having limited biodiversity actions to report on or a lack of understanding regarding biodiversity conservation. Vice versa could be said in the absence of a biodiversity duty report; not producing a report does not necessarily mean that the public body has not undertaken biodiversity conservation actions.

The two acts work well together but it should be borne in mind that meeting the requirements of one does not mean the requirements of the other are necessarily met.

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[16] A list of the published biodiversity duty reports about which the Scottish Government was notified is provided on the Biodiversity Scotland website (http://www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk/duty/work/results/). However, this only provides links to 35 of the 61 reports believed to have been produced. In total, 56 reports have been identified by this study. Of the remaining five, one public body did not respond when contacted, three indicated in the survey that they did not wish to be contacted further, and one stated that the report was not publicly available.

3.2.11   Drawing on the lessons learnt from climate change reporting

Several interviewees mentioned climate change duty reporting and the need for this study to consider the lessons learnt from this process too. The Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN) recently reviewed the public sector climate change reporting process to identify potential improvements. Work included checking through the reports produced, as well as asking public bodies for feedback on the process (SSN, 2016a). Public bodies made several suggestions for improving future climate change duty reporting, including (but not limited to) (SSN, 2016a):

- More training to assist with completing report sections;
- Better management/governance support; and
- Need for better communications from the SSN itself.

In response to these points, the SSN noted that they were developing improved guidance notes with examples and a list of 'reporting leads' for each organisation, so that relevant communications are provided to the most appropriate individuals (Sustainable Scotland Network, 2016). The SSN also commented that more work was required to improve the support provided to organisations, and to promote reporting.

Given the survey responses for this study, the above issues are all considered pertinent to the biodiversity duty reporting process too.

3.3 Findings from desk research

3.3.1 Review of identified biodiversity duty reports

Biodiversity duty reports were identified through desk based research (i.e. internet searches) and the online survey. The desk based research identified 53 publicly accessible biodiversity duty reports; the majority of these were located in the "about us"/corporate section of the public body website or on a dedicated webpage within the public body website. A Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) document available on the Biodiversity Scotland[17] website provided 36 links to public body biodiversity duty reports (or the webpage where they were published). However, one of the links was for a biodiversity duty report published by SSE which is not considered to be a public body and six links went to a webpage that was not linked to biodiversity or did not provide access to the biodiversity duty report. The online survey identified a further eight biodiversity duty reports; however only three of these could be accessed online.

Of the 56 biodiversity duty reports reviewed, 75% (42) were standalone reports with the remaining 25% (14) embedded within another report; these were predominantly sustainability reports. There does not appear to be any relationship between organisation type and whether a standalone or embedded report was produced. Two-thirds (66% or 37) of the public bodies used or partially used the template

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[17] See the biodiversity duty report list, accessed at:
http://www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk/duty/work/results/ on 23rd September 2016

headings to structure the biodiversity duty report. Of the 19 biodiversity duty reports that did not appear to use the template, 14 were embedded within another report. Thus, none of the organisations that used an embedded format followed the structure given in the template.

Over half the reports reviewed contained information relating to organisation structure, examples of leadership or corporate management of biodiversity.

Actions taken to improve biodiversity was the most widely included section, with 79% (44) of reports identifying actions taken to improve biodiversity and 77% (43) identifying practical actions. Partnership initiatives featured quite heavily within the reports with 70% (39) indicating they had undertaken this form of work. The type of practical activity undertaken varied extensively and could be broadly categorised as follows:

- Activities undertaken around offices and land holdings;
- Activities undertaken as part of main responsibilities (prominent in local authority reports);
- Activities undertaken with the general public;
- Activities undertaken with staff;
- Activities undertaken to educate and raise awareness; and
- Activities undertaken to assist with the incorporation of biodiversity into other areas of work (mainly policy and strategy focused).

Examples of biodiversity activities included:

- Non-native species management plans put in place to control and reduce the spread of these species;
- Creation and management of wildflower meadows;
- Putting up nesting boxes and bug hotels;
- Production of guidance documents for staff;
- Running community volunteer projects to engage people in the natural environment; and
- Undertaking biodiversity surveys.

Where public bodies felt they had limited scope to undertake biodiversity actions they generally reported sustainability actions such as waste reduction, carbon and water use and sustainable procurement. Although these actions are unlikely to have a direct impact on biodiversity in comparison to other actions such as habitat creation, they are thought to have an indirect impact. Thus, if a report contained information regarding sustainability actions it was classified as partially covering the section; 13% (7) of reports reviewed were classified in this way.

A large proportion (71% or 40) of the reports identified steps the public body had taken to incorporate biodiversity measures into other areas of policy, strategies or initiatives.

Just over half (52% or 29) of the reports detailed information on follow-up work carried out to measure the impact on biodiversity. However, only 13% (7) provided information and/or findings on monitoring in terms of trends or areas for concern. It should be noted that this could be due to the timeframe of the reports, i.e. if a public body has only just undertaken activities and/or monitoring it may be too soon to see a trend or areas for concern. Only a small percentage (21% or 12) of reports indicated whether the data collected through monitoring had been added to the National Biodiversity Network Gateway (NBN)[18] or Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS)[19]. This could be due to several factors including: a lack of suitable actions to report on, a lack of resources available to enter the information to the databases, or a lack of awareness regarding the databases, how they can be used and by whom.

Working together with other organisations, communicating the biodiversity works undertaken and raising awareness of biodiversity conservation was demonstrated by a high proportion of organisations. For each of these areas, over 60% of biodiversity duty reports provided some information.

Actions/activities included:

- Using social media and press releases to connect with the general public;
- Using an internal intranet to disseminate information to staff;
- Working with local charities, community groups and biodiversity partnerships;
- Holding regular and one-off interactive events; and
- Training for teachers.

One area that only a small percentage (5% or 3) of reports covered was the identification of opportunities for staff to take part in practical actions such as volunteering. Examples provided by the reports included:

- Encouraging staff to litter pick around the office building;
- Taking staff on a volunteer day to plant native trees; and
- Encouraging staff to partake in an annual "spring clean".

It is thought that possible reasons for not reporting on opportunities for staff to take part in practical actions such as volunteering could include resource constraints, increasing staff workloads or volunteer days being used for other areas/themes. Reasons for such a low percentage need further investigation as this could be a

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[18] National Biodiversity Network, accessed at: https://nbn.org.uk/ on 23rd September 2016.

[19] Biodiversity Action Reporting System, accessed at: http://ukbars.defra.gov.uk/ on 23rd September 2016.

useful tool for public bodies that do not undertake biodiversity activities as part of their day-to-day duties or have minimal land holdings.

Just under half of the reports contained a section that described the public bodies' biodiversity highlights from the past year (46% or 26) and future challenges (43% or 24). A proportion of the reports outlined future targets or ambitions for biodiversity in place of challenges.

Considering report format, the biodiversity duty reports were produced in a variety of styles ranging from simple word documents to colourful reports illustrated with photographs and charts. This probably reflects the issue that public bodies were not necessarily sure what the Scottish Government was expecting. Therefore, some produced documents clearly aimed at showcasing their work to the general public, whilst others focused on providing information that showed how they had met their statutory duty. Colourful and stylised reports are thought to be useful for engaging the general public, with pictures providing additional information and in some instances making the actions reported more memorable. However, it should be noted that producing a stylised report may require additional time and resources and therefore may not be suitable for public bodies with limited resources or time pressures (and is also, in itself, unlikely to bring additional biodiversity benefits). Presenting information in tables was a common feature within the biodiversity duty reports; this was done primarily when there was repetitive information for several projects or partnerships (such as timescale, location, funding, outcomes, etc.). The tables worked well to provide key information when used in balance with other forms of information presentation (i.e. case studies, bullet points or paragraphs).

3.3.2 Matching activities reported by public bodies to the key steps from the biodiversity strategy

This exercise involved assessing the published biodiversity duty reports to identify the key steps of the biodiversity strategy to which public bodies were contributing. The assessment indicated that the reported activities were contributing to all 20 of the key steps deemed relevant to public body activities. This is despite the fact that the assessment is expected to be underestimating the contribution because: (1) not all activities will have been reported; and (2) it has not been possible to assess every reported activity against each key step. Instead, information extracted during the initial review of the biodiversity duty reports was matched to the key steps.

Considering the 56 reports reviewed, the three key steps (from the biodiversity strategy) to which the most public bodies were contributing were:

- Establish plans and decisions about land use based on an understanding of ecosystems. Take full account of land use impacts on the ecosystems services that underpin social, economic and environmental health (79% or 44 reports included activities relevant to this key step): example activities included East Dunbartonshire Council reporting how biodiversity was included as a component in several corporate plans and policies such as East Dunbartonshire LBAP 2010-2013, East Dunbartonshire Open Space Strategy,

Local Plan 2, Local Development Plan Main Issues Report (MIR), Kilpatricks Green Network Strategy, and Campsie Green Network Strategy;

- Government and public bodies, including SNH, SEPA and FCS, will work together towards a shared agenda for action to restore ecosystem health at a catchment-scale across Scotland (70% or 39 reports included activities relevant to this key step): example activities included Scottish Water working with SEPA and SNH so that their investment programme identifies the assets that require enhancing for biodiversity; and

- Support local authorities and communities to improve local environments and enhance biodiversity using green space and green networks, allowing nature to flourish and so enhancing the quality of life for people who live there (63% or 35 reports included activities relevant to this key step): example activities included Skills Development Scotland encouraging staff to undertake volunteering such as native tree planting.

The steps to which only a very small number of public bodies were deemed to be contributing included:

- Ensure that measures taken forward under the Common Agricultural Policy encourage land managers to develop and retain the diversity of wildlife habitats and landscape features (3 or 5% of reports);

- Achieve good environmental status for Scottish seas (6 or 11% of reports);

- Integrate protected areas policy with action for wider habitats to combat fragmentation and restore key habitats (8 or 14% of reports); and

- Ensure that biodiversity and ecosystem objectives are fully integrated into flood risk management plans, and restore wetland habitats and woodlands to provide sustainable flood management (8 or 14% of reports).

These steps necessitate specific habitat types or land uses, or require the public body concerned to be able to carry out habitat management, thus may only be available to selected public bodies.

The full results are provided in Annex 7, which indicates the number of reports including activities that are believed to contribute to each key step. It is important to note that these numbers are likely to be an underestimate of the total number of public bodies carrying out activities that are contributing to Scotland's biodiversity targets for two reasons. Firstly, not all organisations have produced biodiversity duty reports, and secondly, this study has not been able to assess all the reported activities, instead it has focused on matching the activities identified as part of the review of the reports to the key steps. It is also important to note that no attempt has been made to look at the strength of the contribution towards the targets.

Given that biodiversity activities reported by public bodies are thought to have contributed to all 20 relevant key steps, this means that there has also been a

contribution to all of the Six Big Steps for Nature (see Annex 8 to see how the key steps are thought to match to the Six Big Steps for Nature).

The activities reported in the published biodiversity duty reports are also thought to contribute to 11 of the 20 Aichi Targets[13] (see Annex 8 to see how the Aichi targets match to the key steps). The biodiversity duty reporting process as a whole is also thought to contribute towards a twelfth Aichi Target, namely Target 1 relating to people being aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably. Through requiring public bodies to publish a report, the WANE Act is raising awareness of biodiversity and the actions organisations (and individuals) can take to conserve biodiversity.

The eight Aichi Targets to which the reviewed reports do not appear to contribute cover:
- Targets that are aimed more at policy and decision making by national governments or their departments (e.g. Target 3 covering the elimination of harmful incentives such as subsidies); and

- Targets relating to specialist knowledge or specific ecosystems which are not relevant to the majority of Scottish public bodies (e.g. Target 10 on minimising the multiple anthropogenic pressures on coral reefs and other vulnerable ecosystems impacted by climate change or ocean acidification).

There may well be a few public bodies that have contributed towards these targets as part of their activities[20]. However, as noted above, this study was not able to assess all the reported activities against every target. Furthermore, public bodies may not have reported every activity.

3.3.3 Data from the internet based survey

This section provides a summary of the findings from the survey. It breaks the results down into several sections:

- All responses – this section includes the results of the introductory survey questions (e.g. on organisation size and type);

- Responses from public bodies that have completed a biodiversity duty report – this section presents the findings from the survey questions that were specific to those public bodies that had produced a report;

- Responses from public bodies that have not or do not know if they have completed a biodiversity duty report – this section includes questions on awareness of the biodiversity duty and any reasons why they may not have published a report; and

- Responses relating to actions the Scottish Government could take to provide assistance with biodiversity duty reporting – questions on potential actions the Scottish Government could take were asked of both those who had completed

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[20] For example, the Scottish Government may be able to carry out biodiversity related activities that are not available to other organisations.

a report and those who did not complete/did not know if they had completed a report. The responses are therefore reported together in this section.

All responses

Of the 139 public bodies in existence between 2012 and 2014 and invited to partake in the online survey, 58% (81) provided a response. There were several incomplete survey responses and a further two responses were completed by respondents that had not provided an official/accurate organisation name; these responses were therefore not included to avoid any duplications as it was not possible to identify the public body[21].

Respondents were asked to select the type of organisation they were classified as; they were also given the opportunity to select "other response". Data from the survey indicated that the largest numbers of responses were received from local authorities (26 or 32% of all respondents) and executive national non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) (18 or 22%). The survey responses indicate that none of the six invited public corporations completed the survey (see Figure 3.1).

Number of responses

Organisation type	Number of responses
Local authority	26
Executive NDPB	18
Health body	9
Other significant national body	8
Other response	7
Advisory NDPB	5
Executive agency	3
Commissioner/ombudsman	3
Non-ministerial department	1
Tribunal	1
Public corporation	0

Figure 3.1: Responses to "Please select your organisation type" (n=81)

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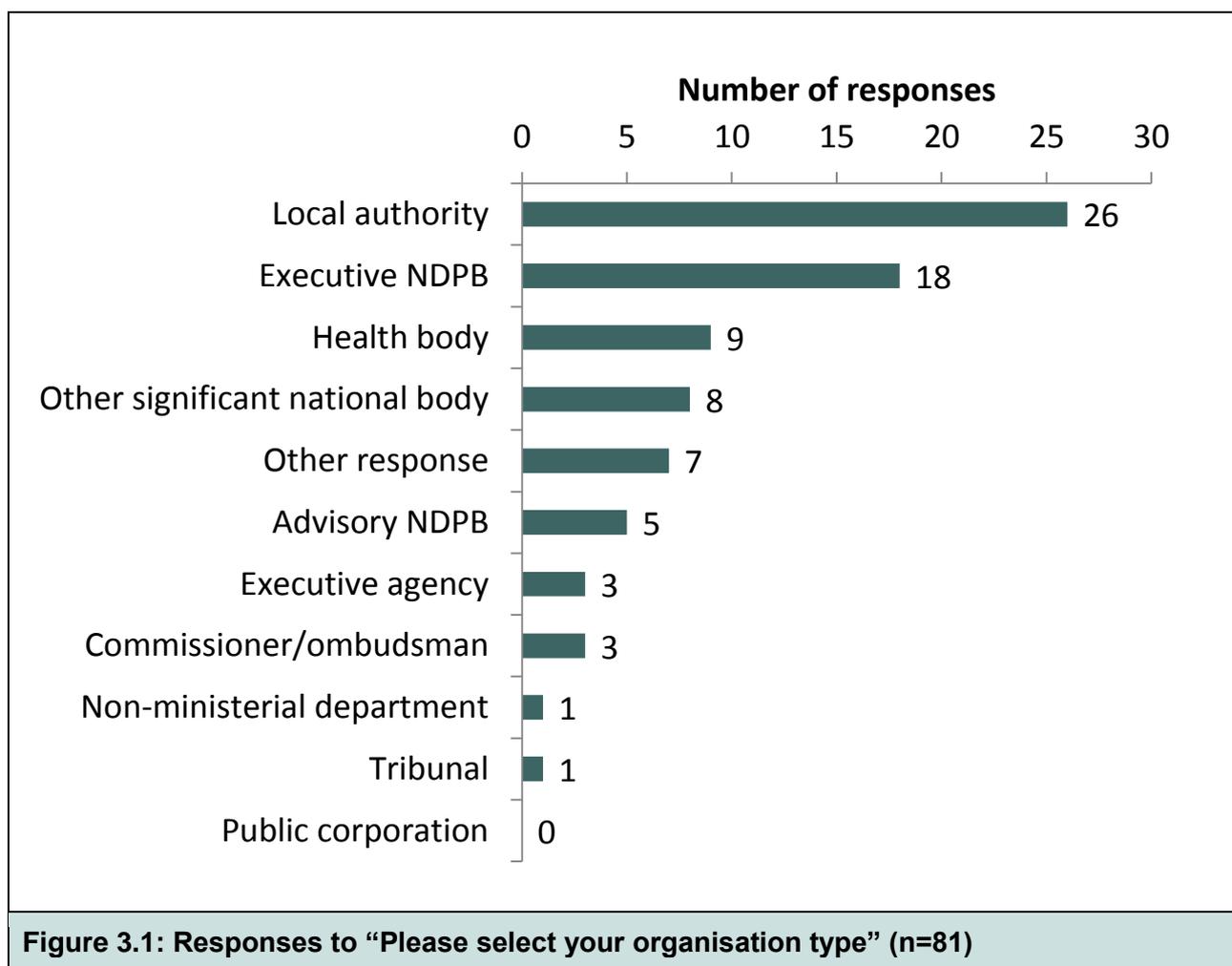
[21] Note that the public body that was erroneously invited to provide a response (they were not in existence during the required time period) has been excluded from this analysis since the survey questions are not relevant to their situation.

However, the way in which the survey respondents classified themselves did not always match up with the classification for each public body as provided by the Scottish Public Bodies Directory. For example, a public body may have ticked the box for 'other significant national body' when responding to the survey, yet on the Public Bodies Directory they are classified as a 'public corporation'.

Since the internet survey asked respondents to provide the name of their organisation, it has been possible to match these names to the list of organisations and types given in the National Public Bodies Directory. It has also been possible to identify the type of public body for the seven respondents who ticked 'other response'.

Table 3.1 shows the results of this matching exercise. It presents the number of responses for each public body type according to the categorisation of public bodies by the National Public Bodies Directory.

Table 3.1: Number of each type of public body that responded to the survey according to the classifications given in the National Public Bodies Directory

Type of public body	Number of responses
Local authorities	26
Executive non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs)	22
Health bodies	9
Other significant national bodies	9
Commissioners and ombudsmen	4
Executive agencies	3
Advisory non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs)	3
Non-ministerial departments	2
Public corporations	2
Tribunals	1
Total	**81**

Note: Responses have been categorised by matching the organisation name to the list of public bodies and types given in the National Public Bodies Directory.

Table 3.1 indicates that:

- Local authorities contributed the largest number of responses (26) to the total, accounting for 32% of all total survey responses;

- Tribunals accounted for the lowest number of completed surveys (1); and

- All public body types are represented in the survey results if the classifications as given in the National Public Bodies Directory are applied.

Note that for the remainder of this section, the results are reported directly from the survey without any reclassification of responses.

Large public bodies with 250 or more staff made up 64% (51) of the responses; the remainder of the responses were fairly evenly distributed between micro, small and medium sized public bodies (see Figure 3.2).   One public body chose not to answer the question relating to size. It should be noted that the answers selected by some of the respondents may not be correct[22]; for example, one public body selected "micro" when staffing numbers provided on their website indicate that they are actually "large".

Figure 3.2: Responses to "Please indicate your organisation's size" (n=80)

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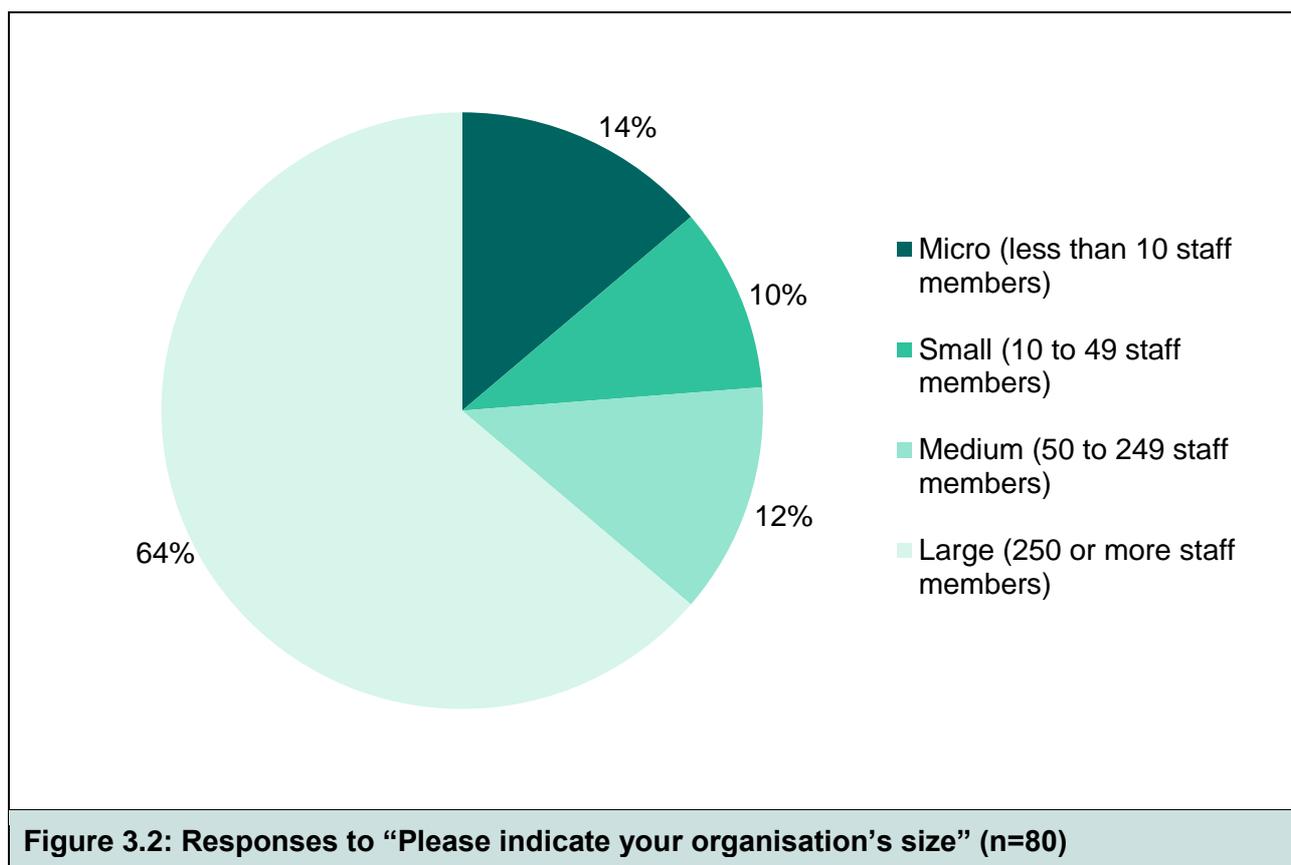
[22] It is not possible to check every answer given by the respondents and it is assumed that the majority of the answers are factually correct and representative of the public body for which they are being provided.

Of the 81 public bodies that completed the survey, 53% (43) had produced a biodiversity duty report and 47% (38) either had not produced or did not know if they had produced a biodiversity duty report (Figure 3.3). It should be noted that in four instances this study identified a report or part of a report that could act as a biodiversity duty report for a public body that had selected "No" or "Don't know".

Figure 3.3: Percentage of public bodies that have (yes) or have not (no) completed a biodiversity duty report (n=81)
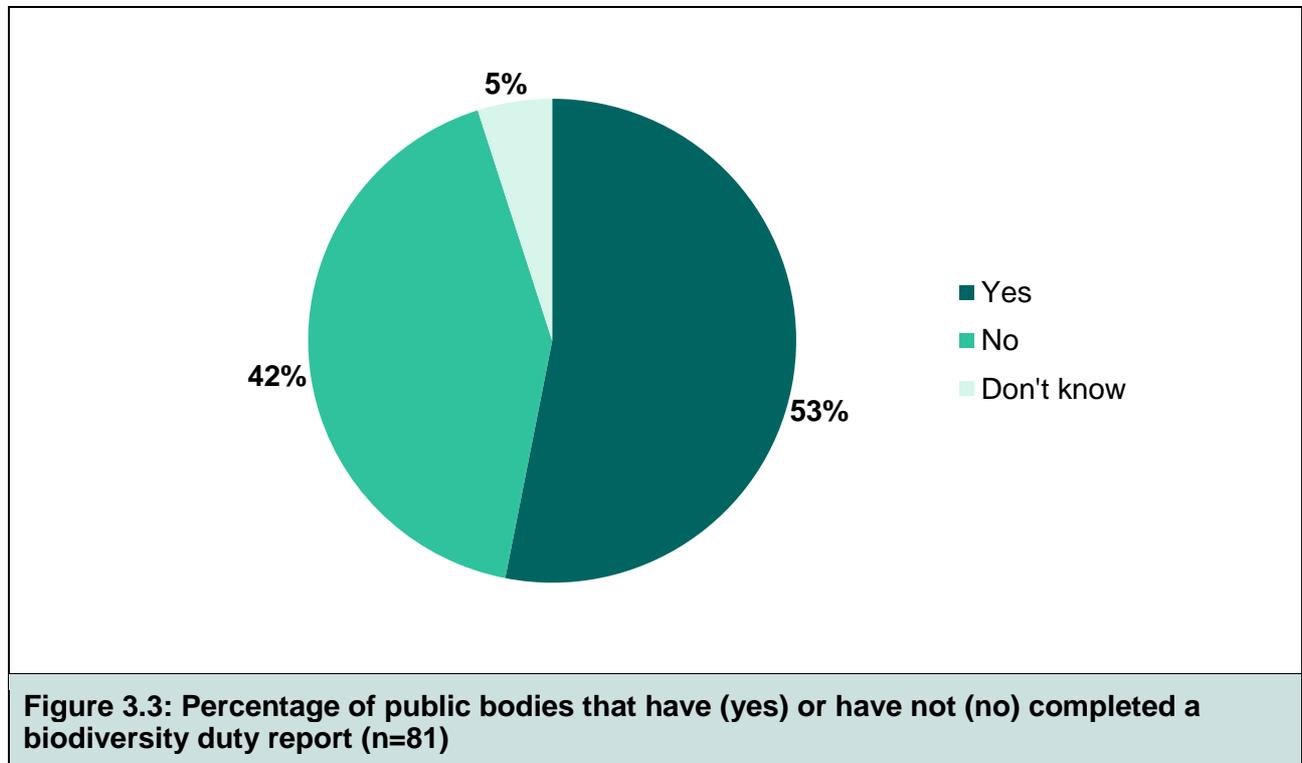
Responses from public bodies that <u>have</u> completed a biodiversity duty report
Over three quarters (77% or 33) of the 43 respondents stated that their biodiversity duty report was produced as standalone report. The remaining reports are embedded within another report.

A considerable proportion of the biodiversity duty reports have been made publicly available online. Of the 43 respondents, 93% (40) published their reports on the internet; this will enable sharing with other public bodies, other organisations and the public. It is not known whether the reports that are not available online can be accessed by request. It is worth noting that some public bodies share a website or do not have a dedicated website, thus it might be difficult for these public bodies to make their report available online.

A large proportion of the 43 respondents that had produced a biodiversity duty report were aware of the template document (77% or 33). Of these respondents, 82% (27) had either used and/or modified the template to produce their report and 15% (5) had not used the template at all (Figure 3.4). It is possible that the one respondent that selected "Don't know" could have chosen this answer due to the person/persons that produced the report no longer working at the public body or the survey being completed by someone that was not involved in the production of the report.

All public bodies said that they had written the report; however one public body also stated that they instructed another organisation to write the report. It is not clear if this was an error within the survey response or could be explained by collaboration between the public body and an external organisation.

Figure 3.4: Responses to "Was the biodiversity duty guidance/template used in the production of your report?" (n= 33)
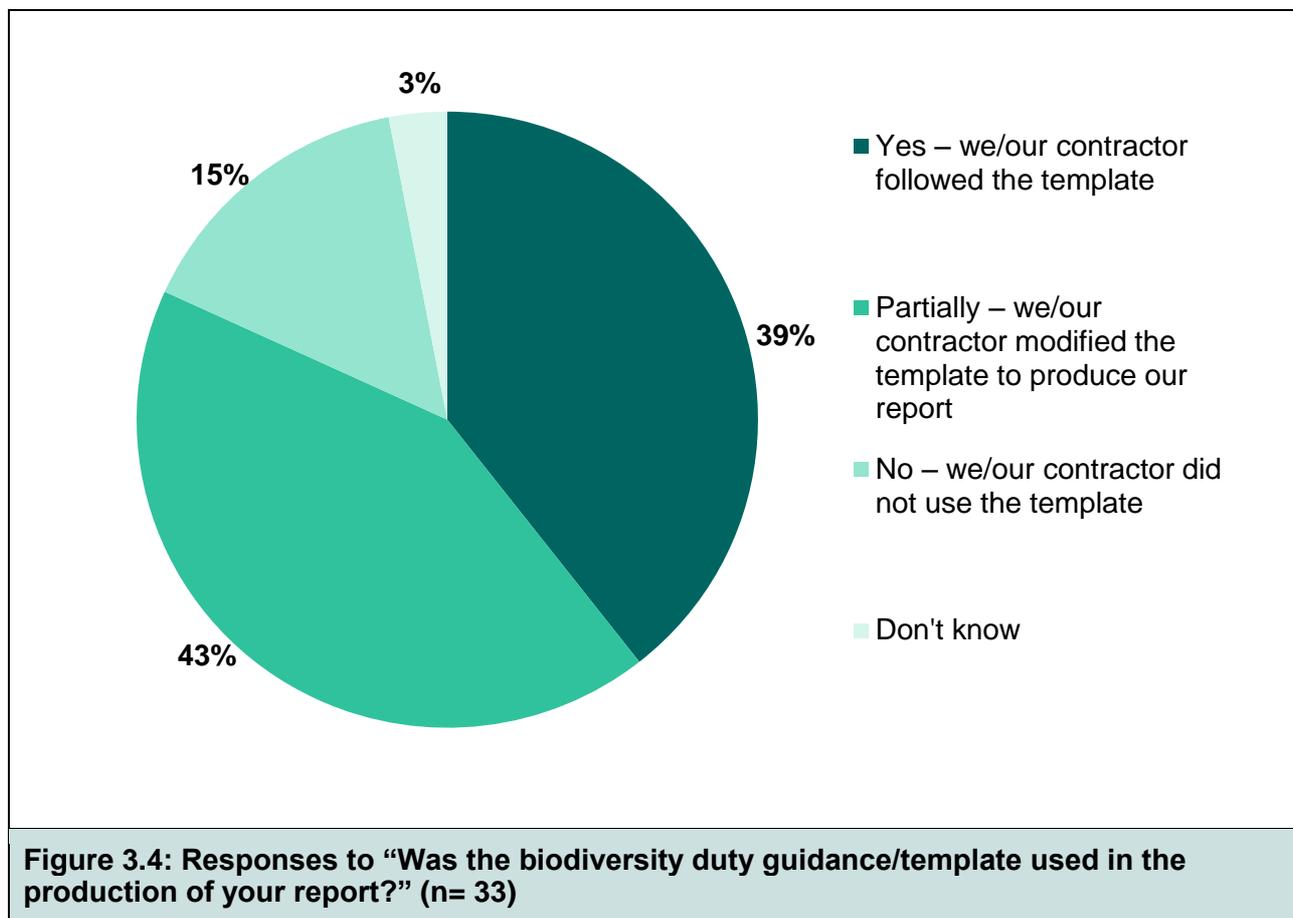
Of the respondents aware of the template almost half (43% or 14) thought that the template did not need to be modified, only 24% (8) thought that it did need to be modified and a third (33% or 11) chose "Don't know" (Figure 3.5). The reasons for choosing "Don't know" are not clear but could be due to the time lapse between using the template to produce the report and the survey, or respondents not using the template to produce the report.
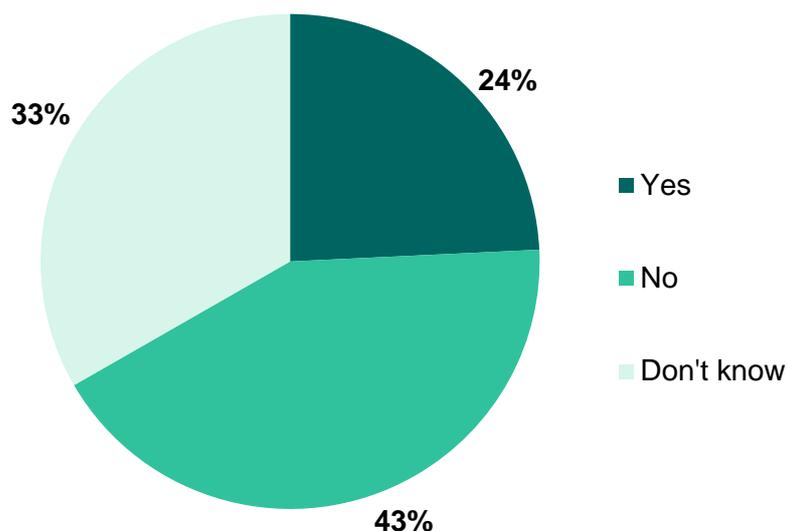
Figure 3.5: Response to "Do you think that the template needs to be modified?"
Percentage of public bodies that would like to see the template modified (n=33)

Respondents that thought the template needed to be modified were asked to select the sections they would like to see modified (note that respondents could select multiple sections). Of the eight respondents asked this question two did not choose a section but indicated that they would like to see the template accompanied by training and that the use of the template should be mandatory to enable comparison between reports. Of the respondents that did choose sections that needed to be modified, four chose Section 2 (actions taken to improve biodiversity conservation on the ground). Section 4 (monitoring) was identified as a section requiring modification by two respondents (see Table 3.2).

Specific points made included:

- The need to provide guidelines and examples of actions that are suitable for offices without outside spaces;
- Section 2 (actions) should refer to the route map and the Six Big Steps for Nature;
- There needs to be more guidance in each section, along with a guide to the structure and layout of the report; and
- The template should be accompanied by training.

Table 3.2: Number of respondents that would like to see changes to each section of the template

Section of the template that public bodies would like to see modified	Number of respondents
Section 1: introductory information about your organisation and biodiversity (including governance)	3
Section 2: actions taken to improve biodiversity conservation on the ground	4
Section 3: mainstreaming	3
Section 4: monitoring	2
Section 5: partnership working and biodiversity communications	3
Section 6: biodiversity highlights of the past year (including challenges)	3

Note: respondents could select multiple sections when answering the question

Respondents were also asked if there were any additional sections they would like to see added to the template. Of the seven respondents to this question, a majority (86% or 6) said no. A further question asked respondents if they thought there should be other changes to the template. There were six responses to this question with 67% (4 respondents) indicating that they would like other changes.

Several public bodies provided additional comments on revisions to the template. These requested:

- A section on how the work that has been done helps to deliver the biodiversity strategy (but this could be incorporated into the other sections);
- Links to example reports;
- A review of all biodiversity duty reports could identify how a revised template could be produced to inform the next round of reporting; and
- A standardised way of producing a report.

Responses from public bodies that <u>have not or do not know</u> if they have completed a biodiversity duty report

Over two thirds (26 or 68%) of the 38 respondents that did not or do not know if they had produced a biodiversity duty report were not aware of the need to do so. Eleven of the respondents that were not aware that they had to produce a report did not state any other factors in not reporting; therefore it can be assumed that if

they had known about the requirement to report, they would have done so. This could have increased report production from 53% to a possible 67% amongst survey respondents. Common reasons for not producing a report included a "lack of biodiversity actions to report on" and a "lack of expertise/no designated biodiversity officer" (see Figure 3.6). Several (15 or 39% respondents gave two or more reasons for not reporting; this could indicate that encouraging and/or assisting these public bodies to report in the second round may be more challenging as several factors will need to be addressed.
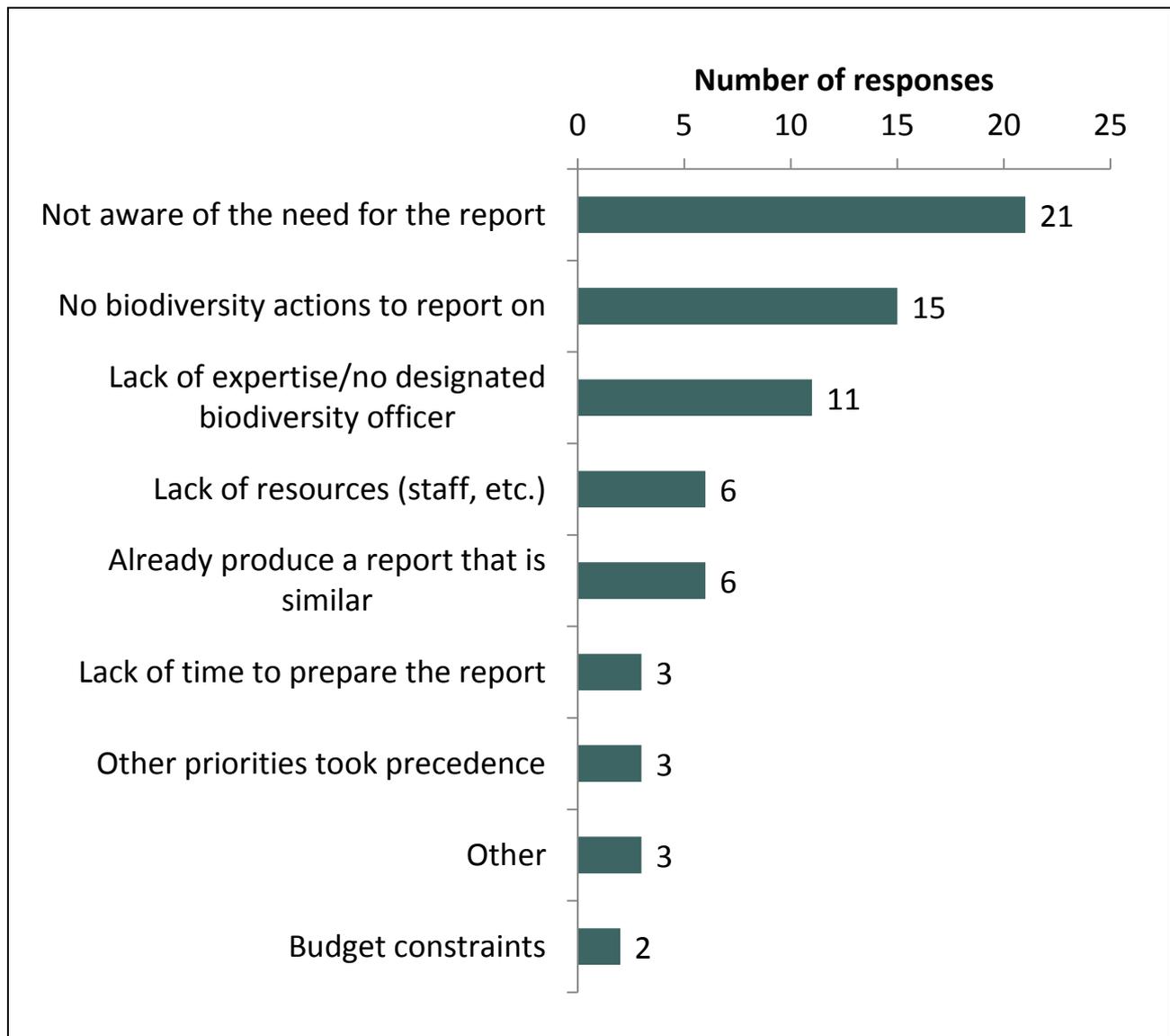
Figure 3.6: Response to "What were the main reasons for not reporting?" (n=34)

Some of the reasons provided by public bodies for not reporting included:

- Office location/characteristics: one respondent noted that they had a city centre office without any outside space (except car parking). Therefore, they found it difficult to implement any biodiversity actions. Another felt that the duty mainly appeared to be focused on land usage which was not applicable to their organisation;

- Nature of the public body: one respondent felt that the nature of their business meant that they did not need to consider biodiversity issues; and

- Lack of awareness: one respondent stated that they had not been aware of the need to report (although they do publish an annual sustainability report). Another commented that whilst they had not previously been aware of the requirement, they now intended to produce a report.

The majority (89% or 34) of respondents that had not or did not know if they had produced a report were also not aware of the template to guide report production (Figure 3.7). All four of the respondents that were aware of the template either felt that the template did not need to be modified (one respondent) or did not know if it needed to be modified (three respondents).
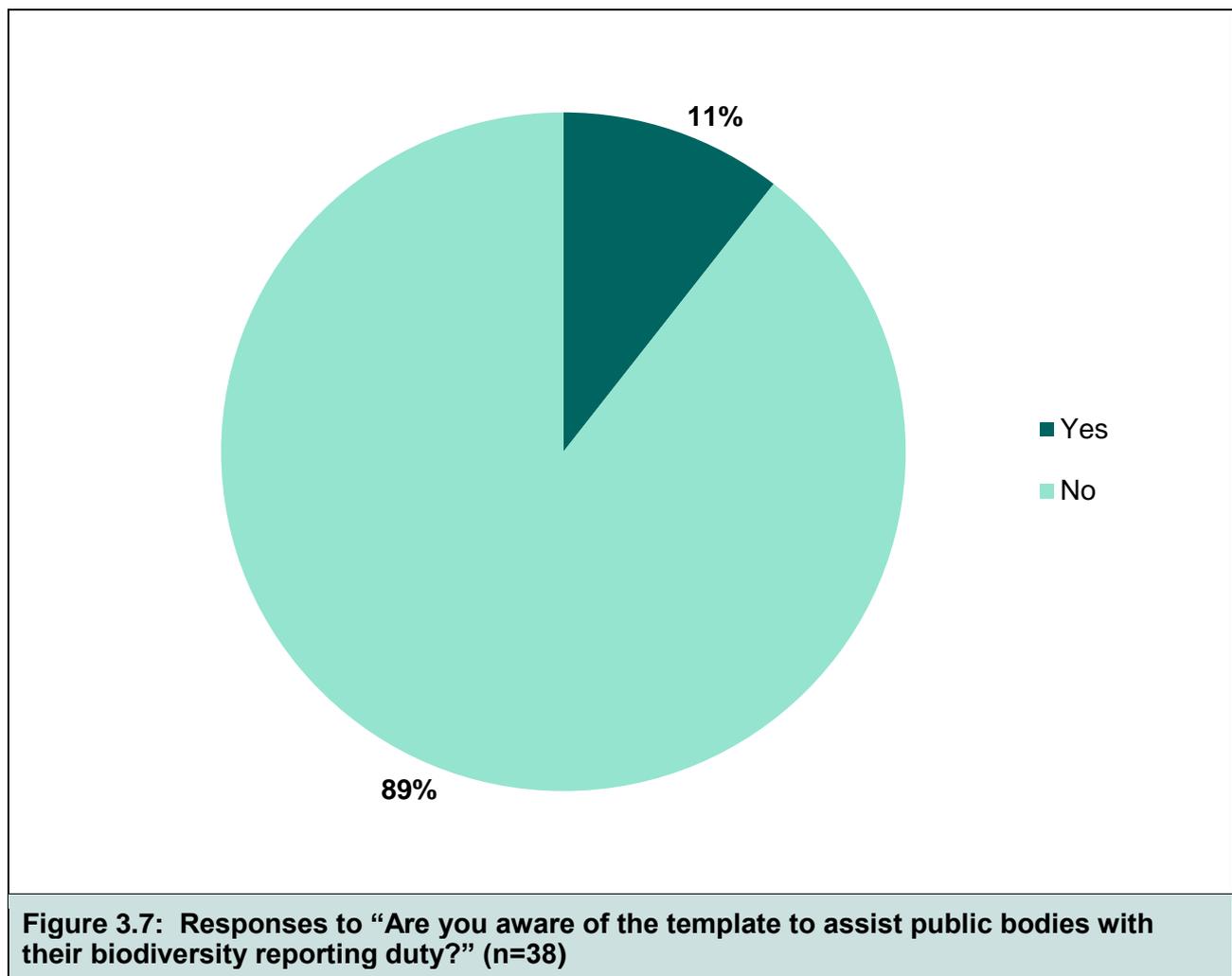
Figure 3.7: Responses to "Are you aware of the template to assist public bodies with their biodiversity reporting duty?" (n=38)

Responses relating to actions the Scottish Government could take to provide assistance with biodiversity duty reporting

Over half (58% or 45) of the public bodies providing a response said that there were actions the Scottish Government could undertake to assist with the biodiversity duty reporting; of these 37% (29) were public bodies that had produced a report and 21% (16) were public bodies that had not produced a report (Figure 3.8). Thus, even where a public body has already produced a report, they may still

feel that there is more that could be done to support public bodies with future biodiversity duty reporting.
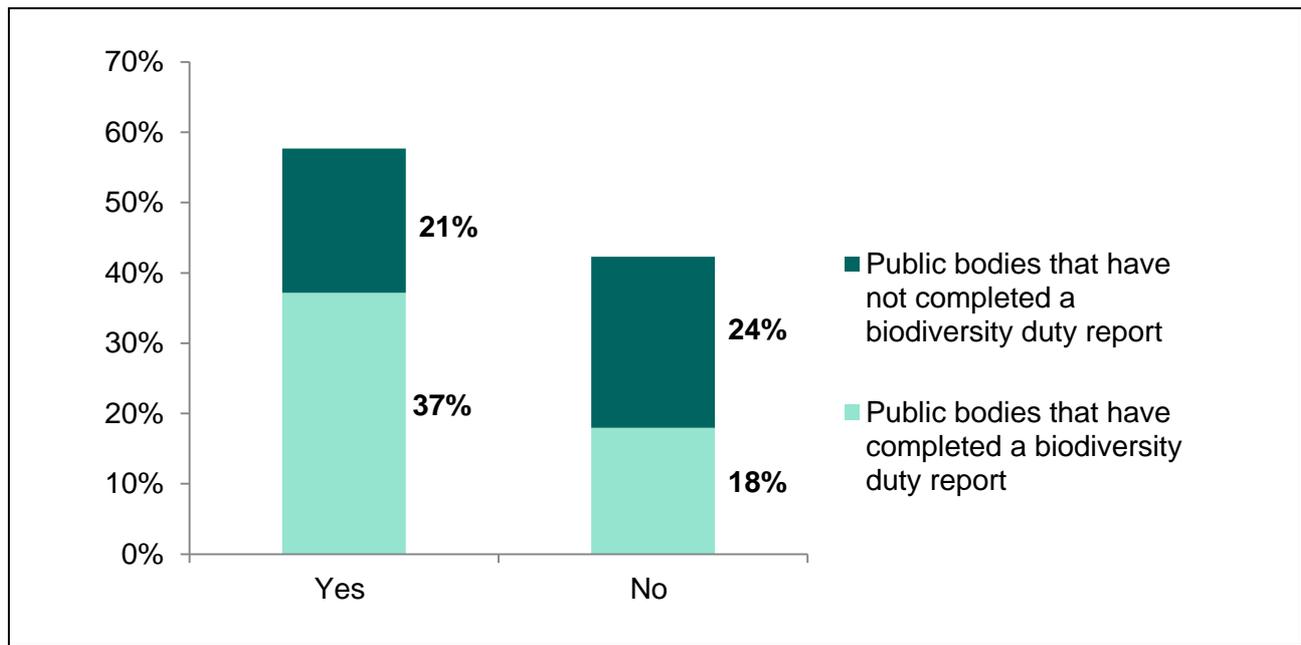
Figure 3.8: Responses to "Beyond the production of the template, are there any other actions (e.g. setting up an online forum for sharing of best practice) that the Scottish Government could take to assist you with biodiversity duty reporting?" (n=78)

Several public bodies provided comments in response to "Beyond the production of the template, are there any other actions (e.g. setting up an online forum for sharing of best practice) that the Scottish Government could take to assist you with biodiversity duty reporting?" Some of the points raised by those who had produced a report included:

- Online forum or face-to-face meetings: several respondents commented that it would be useful to have an online forum for sharing best practice. Of these, one noted that they were a small organisation with no land, so it would be useful to see how other organisations in a similar position met the biodiversity duty reporting requirements. Another organisation thought that a face-to-face event would be better for sharing best practice.

- Expectations: one respondent thought it would be useful to have more information on the Scottish Government's expectations in terms of showing compliance with the duty and ensuring continued improvement. Another noted that there needed to be more clarity on what biodiversity actions were expected;

- Raising the profile of biodiversity: one respondent commented that the Scottish Government should assist with raising the profile of biodiversity. Another thought that national level awareness raising would be useful, since they felt that many services within local authorities were still unaware of the biodiversity duty and did not understand that it applied to all functions and services;

- Use of the reports: a request was made for greater clarity on how the reports were going to be used;

- Feedback: several respondents requested feedback on their reports;

- One location for information: one respondent commented that it would be good to have one location that provided access to all the reports and enabled knowledge sharing/learning between bodies; and

- Training: one respondent asked for training on how to complete the report. Another asked for guidance prior to the second reporting round.

Public bodies that had not or did not know if they had produced a biodiversity report raised a few similar points, as well as additional ones:

- Collective seminar/conference: one respondent asked for a seminar/conference with other public bodies to help them understand biodiversity and how their actions may or may not affect biodiversity;

- Advice: there was a request for advice and support from a named person at the Scottish Government;

- Best practice examples from similar organisations: one respondent stated that they had city centre offices with no outside space, and would be assisted by learning best practice from public bodies in similar situations;

- Communication and guidance: one respondent noted that they had not been aware of the need to report and that some form of communication and guidance would be helpful;

- Online forum: one respondent noted that a forum could be useful when combined with a support line providing advice and assistance; and

- Reminder system: one respondent commented that some form of reminder system would have been helpful in terms of making them aware of the need to report but also providing them with sufficient time to make a report available before the deadline.

Table 3.3 provides a list of the possible actions identified by public bodies, along with the number of public bodies suggesting each action.

Table 3.3: Suggested actions along with the number of public bodies making each suggestion

Suggested action	Number of public bodies requesting each action
Online forum / sharing platform / knowledge hub	14
Best practice / sharing with similar organisations	9
Advice on reporting requirement (how much is needed) / resource links / guidance document	7

Guidance on roles / actions public body should be undertaking / information on next steps / improvements / what is biodiversity conservation	6
Communication from the Scottish Government about the need to report / early warning system / awareness raising	3
Seminar / conference / workshop	3
Advice / support from Scottish Government (named person) / personal visits	2
Clear strategy with regards to how to carry out biodiversity works and manage budget cuts	2
Expert advice (e.g. from RSPB, SNH)	2
Information on how the reports will be used	2
More standardised way of reporting	2
Promotion of collaboration / joined up thinking	2
Publish reports	2
Raise the profile of biodiversity	2
Requirement for measuring action / progress / traffic light system	2
Utilise third party information, support and guidance	2
Contact details	1
Develop different templates dependent upon the needs of the public body	1
Encourage the use of a Biodiversity Duty Action Plan	1
Feedback	1
Training (could link this to guidance or visits or workshops)	1

Several respondents provided information in the "Any other comments" box. Points raised by those public bodies who had reported included:

- Aligning the requirement to report with the route map: one respondent suggested that biodiversity duty reporting could be aligned with the Six Big Steps for Nature/route map;

- Variation between reports: another respondent commented that it is not unexpected that the reports vary in terms of quality and substance. They felt that public bodies reflected the actions of wider society, in that society liked

biodiversity unless the need to take action to conserve it had negative impacts for income or constrained the way they wished to live their life;

- Feedback: one respondent note that there would be merit in having feedback from the Scottish Government in terms of which reports are good examples. They also requested a clear and structured template for all public bodies to follow, since this would facilitate comparisons;

- Acknowledgement: one respondent commented that they had written to the Scottish Government about the reporting measures they had taken, but had not been acknowledged;

- Provision of advice: one respondent suggested that the Scottish Government and/or SNH could provide further advice on reporting through the LBAP Network meetings; and

- Purpose of the report: one respondent was not sure about the purpose of the report (other than it fulfilling a statutory requirement).

Comments from public bodies that had not or do not know if they had completed a biodiversity duty report included:

- Actions to start the reporting process: one respondent commented that now they were aware of the template and the need to report, they would take action to identify what they needed to do, including bringing forward an internal resource plan. Another respondent noted that they were taking steps to rectify the oversight and would be in contact with the Scottish Government; and

- Aligning reporting requirements: one respondent noted that they need to produce a number of different reports with the same themes at different times. They felt that it would be useful if these reports could be simplified and/or amalgamated.

3.3.4 Data from the telephone interviews

Public bodies that have completed a biodiversity duty report
Interviews were held with five public bodies who had published a biodiversity duty report. Whilst all these public bodies were clearly aware of the reporting requirement, it was noted by one that a more proactive approach to communication was required by the Scottish Government to make public bodies more aware of the requirement. They also felt that some organisations would not necessarily understand what biodiversity actually was. This suggests that further work is needed to raise awareness about biodiversity and the sorts of actions that organisations can take, even if they do not own any land or include biodiversity amongst their everyday functions.

In terms of carrying out biodiversity related activities and reporting upon them, interviewees raised several issues including:

- Where individuals carry out a lot of biodiversity related work, cutting this down to fit it into the report is a challenge;

- Public bodies have many reporting commitments. Meeting all these commitments is challenge in itself;

- Timing is crucial. When putting the biodiversity duty report together, there is a need to bring in information from the various different departments in the organisation. It takes time to do this and also have the report approved by committee [note that the approvals process is likely be dependent on the type of organisation];

- Funding is a limiting factor and likely to remain so in the future. Biodiversity actions need to be incorporated into other activities;

- There is a lack of resources for rigorous biodiversity monitoring; and

- There is an educational barrier in terms of land management. For example, the general public has specific expectations of how amenity land should look. Any changes to land management for biodiversity purposes need to be explained.

A range of actions were suggested to help support public bodies in their reporting including:

- The provision of a guidance document with best practice examples. One interviewee also noted that there is the potential to learn from the climate change duty reporting template. The template could be structured to take account of the contribution of the activities to the biodiversity strategy;

- Feedback was required from the Scottish Government on whether the report was as expected, and importantly, whether the reported actions were supporting delivery of the biodiversity strategy;

- One interviewee felt that there was the potential to take a more tailored approach to reporting, with organisations being guided towards the activity and reporting level that was appropriate for them, perhaps through the use of a flow chart. Whilst one interviewee wondered about setting up a standard report form with simple questions, another thought that a very prescriptive approach to the template would not work. A further interviewee specifically did not want a form to complete because of the variation between public bodies;

- A sharing good practice event would be beneficial, but there are resource issues with attending such events; and

- Setting up partnerships between those organisations that know about biodiversity and those that do not. Such a 'buddy system' could help organisations carry out activities and produce their reports.

Additional points raised included concerns that the template was based around bureaucratic box ticking (in particular, the introductory information section) rather than actually taking actions to improve biodiversity. It was also commented that it was better to encourage and support organisations to report rather than imposing consequences for not reporting.

One interviewee was additionally concerned about the need to consider the interactions between biodiversity duty reports and any pre-existing local Biodiversity Action Plans. In relation to this they requested a steer on how much consultation should be undertaken prior to drafting the forward-looking Biodiversity Action Plan part of the biodiversity duty reports, given the challenging financial climate and the likely reluctance of public body managers to commit to something they may subsequently be unable to deliver due to resource issues.

Public bodies that have not completed a biodiversity duty report
Interviews were held with six public bodies who had not published a biodiversity duty report. The main reasons provided for not reporting included a lack of awareness (with several only becoming aware of the need to report when they received the invite to the online survey for this study); a general fatigue relating to reporting with the need to produce a report being viewed as a box ticking exercise; and believing that the requirement was not applicable to them.

Several interviewees were also not aware of having been in receipt of any information on the need to report from the Scottish Government. This is perhaps because the relevant communications were sent to a different individual within the organisation. Indeed, this study encountered difficulties when trying to identify contacts for the internet based survey.

In terms of support required from the Scottish Government, interviewees made a number of suggestions including:

- Further guidance on the activities to take to meet the biodiversity duty (for example, the development and implementation of Biodiversity Action Plans) and, related to this, what to report on;

- The need for a named contact at the Scottish Government to whom questions can be directed.

- Clear leadership on the issue with a commitment to resourcing;

- Improved communication. One interviewee suggested that communications needed to be better targeted, for example, a letter from the Minister to the head of each public body;

- An acknowledgement from the Scottish Government when a report is produced for example, all public bodies were provided with feedback on their climate change duty reports;

- The inclusion of the biodiversity duty report within the Model Publication Scheme, which provides a list of the documents that public bodies should publish;

- The inclusion of best practice examples within the guidance, with examples from a range of public bodies. Guidance offered needs to be appropriate to the characteristics of the organisation (e.g. size, role and land holdings). A one size fits all approach will not work; and

- The provision of a checklist of 20 to 30 actions for an organisation to go through. One interviewee noted that the examples needed to be things directly relating to biodiversity, rather than activities such as recycling waste and sustainable procurement which would overlap with the carbon report.

As an additional point, one organisation noted that they intended to set up an annual process to ensure the report was built up over time (instead of everything at the end of the three year period).

In terms of events and training, several interviewees were also asked about whether they would find it useful to have face-to-face events to learn about the biodiversity duty, similar to those held for climate change duty reporting[23]. In general, there was a positive response to this. One interviewee also mentioned that it would be useful to have a forum, similar to the forum for Strategic Environmental Assessments, the National Development Plans forum, etc. Another was concerned that a one day course would take up too much time, and thought that a one hour meeting would be more appropriate.

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[23] Keep Scotland Beautiful has run three 'supporting reporting' events to help those responsible for producing climate change duty reports.

4 Conclusions and policy recommendations

This chapter presents the conclusions for each of the study objectives. It also includes a set of recommendations drawing on evidence from the review of the reports, internet survey and telephone interviews, as well as insights from the climate change duty reporting process. The recommendations primarily relate to communication about the biodiversity duty reports and the reporting process with public bodies themselves, but also the general public to help raise awareness and encourage people to read about what public bodies are doing for Scotland's biodiversity. In terms of producing reports, it is recommended that public bodies are provided with more guidance, in particular, example activities and reports. The chapter additionally includes some suggestions for the Scottish Government to consider in terms of facilitating communication with public bodies, maintaining a public record of when reports are due for all organisations, and including biodiversity duty reporting within the best value toolkits.

4.1 Overview

This section provides the conclusions and recommendations. The conclusions are organised according to the project objectives. The recommendations follow, and are accompanied by supporting evidence. There is also a list of suggestions for consideration by the Scottish Government. These suggestions have been developed from comments made by public bodies (during the survey and telephone interviews) as well as ideas from the project team when analysing the findings.

4.2 Main conclusions

Conclusions have been drawn for each of the objectives as described below. Note that objective 1 is broken down into sub-objectives (1a to 1d).

4.2.1 Objective 1

To identify, compare and contrast the reports that public bodies have used to fulfil their biodiversity reporting duty

Objective 1a) Identify and evaluate the range of approaches used by public bodies (for example, format, style, detail included, use of an independent/bespoke report or reporting as part of wider corporate reports e.g. climate and sustainability report) to report on their duty, identify merits of these differing approaches and recommend best practice.

The review of the biodiversity duty reports and the responses received to the online survey indicated that public bodies produced their own reports and did not use external consultants. There was a preference for standalone documents with 75% (42 out of 56) produced this way; the remaining reports were embedded within another report. With some exceptions, embedded reports tended to be produced by public bodies that had relatively limited opportunities to carry out biodiversity related activities (i.e. they did not have a biodiversity department, and/or did not

own land/assets). Consequently, embedded reports generally contained less detail than the standalone reports, and were typically included in annual reports, for example, sustainability reports. This may mean that these organisations report on biodiversity annually. Such annual reporting could have benefits in terms of helping to retain biodiversity on the organisation's agenda. It might also ensure that information is recorded every year, thus avoiding the situation whereby a biodiversity duty report is due, and information for the preceding two years has been mislaid. However, the use of an annual embedded report is perhaps less useful for the reader who wishes to compare one public body's actions with that of another organisation. In some cases, it is necessary to look across three sustainability reports to identify the actions for the three year period (but note that this is not the case for all public bodies that have used an embedded format).

The majority of the reports used (59%; 33) or partially used (7%; 4 reports) the template developed by the LBAP network. However, some public bodies used bespoke headings that better fitted their organisation and activities. Whilst the template provided a structure for public bodies to report against, it was noted by some public bodies that more guidance was needed in terms of what type of information and level of detail should be included within the reports. A proportion of local authorities reported practical actions by department (education, health, planning, etc.) and this may be useful for other large public bodies. Several public bodies have developed and used biodiversity duty action plans to help set out what they want to achieve over the three year period. This also appears to have helped with progress monitoring and the integration of biodiversity into multiple areas of an organisation.

Objective 1b) Assess specific reporting in relation to:

> **1. Governance** – leadership and management of biodiversity matters;
> **2. Action** – actions the public bodies have taken to protect and enhance biodiversity and that contribute to the 2020 Challenge;
> **3. Mainstreaming** – how biodiversity has been incorporated into corporate policy, plans and projects;
> **4. Partnership** – working with other stakeholders; and
> **5. Communication** – raising awareness, building capacity and working with communities.

This study reviewed all 56 biodiversity duty reports identified against the five areas listed above. The category for which most organisations provided information was section 2 (actions), with 79% (44) of the reports including information on specific biodiversity actions. This was closely followed by the mainstreaming section, with 71% (40) identifying steps the organisation has taken to incorporate biodiversity measures into other areas of policy, strategy or initiatives.

Within the governance section, many reports referred to their environmental or sustainability policies, with local authorities also providing information on local development plans and other initiatives where biodiversity had specifically been taken into account. Local authorities also tended to mention committees set up to

cover biodiversity issues, as well as particular individuals who had led on certain areas. Within other types of organisation, there was less information on leadership; perhaps because such organisations did not include biodiversity amongst their core/everyday functions, thus there was less time (or knowledge base) for the development of the biodiversity specific initiatives by staff members. However, there were exceptions, for example, Skills Development Scotland highlighted that it has a network of Green Champions that works across the organisation[24].

Specific biodiversity actions were mentioned by the majority of the reports, with some providing many examples, and others providing considerable levels of detail for a few selected case study examples. Examples include reviewing the Local Nature Conservation Sites (Aberdeenshire Council[25]), partnership work with the Forestry Commission to develop natural and diverse woodlands at Loch Katrine (Scottish Water[26]), and providing support to a Bee Health & Pollination Awareness project (Scottish Enterprise[27]). A few organisations provided general statements to the effect that they were considering the impacts of their activities on biodiversity. It may be that in future reporting years, these organisations will be more aware of the types of actions they can take (potentially through learning from the existing reports and actions of other organisations). Therefore, it is expected that they will be able to report on specific actions in the future.

Most reports reviewed provided some information on mainstreaming, with examples including the Scottish Road Works Commissioner noting that biodiversity is to be taken into account in the review of the Corporate Plan and Communication Plan[28]. The review did however identify some overlap in the information reported under the mainstreaming and governance sections, thus suggesting that public bodies found it difficult to differentiate between the two.

Many reports included details of partnership working. Whilst a considerable number of public bodies mentioned their local biodiversity partnership, a number of other networks and organisations were also highlighted such as the Ayrshire Green Network, the Southern Uplands Partnership and the Linlithgow Loch Catchment Management Group. There were also various informal arrangements and other agreements between two or more public bodies. For example, the National Museums of Scotland noted that they established a Coronation Meadow that is maintained in partnership with the National Trust for Scotland[29], whilst the Forestry

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[24] Skills Development Scotland (2014): Sustainability Report 2013/14, Produced October 2014.

[25] Aberdeenshire Council (2014): Biodiversity Duty Reporting – December 2014, Reporting period 2011-2014

[26] Scottish Water (2014): Sustainability Report, 2014, Doing the right thing for Scotland.

[27] Scottish Enterprise (2014): Biodiversity duty report 2011-2014, accessed at: http://www.scottish-enterprise.com/knowledge-hub/articles/publication/biodiversity-report on 23rd September 2016.

[28] The Office of the Scottish Road Works Commissioner, Biodiversity Duty Report 2011-2014, Version 1.0

[29] National Museums Scotland (2015): Biodiversity Duty Report (2011-2014), January 2015.

Commission Scotland worked with SNH to finalise and publish a national rhododendron control strategy[30]. Local authorities in particular reported working with 'Friends of...' groups on local green spaces. Partnerships with commercial arms of organisations were also reported, for example, South Ayrshire noted that they had been working with golf courses to deal with environmental issues such as burn maintenance and future planting[31].

Biodiversity communications tools reported included (but were not limited to) websites, blogs, research papers, exhibitions, interpretation panels, the development of phone apps to record non-native species (SEPA[32]), articles in newsletters, and guided walks. The Care Inspectorate reported that they held an annual photographic competition for staff, with subjects featuring Scottish wildlife and the countryside[33]. Most local authorities provided details on their ranger services, and the various activities these groups ran for schoolchildren (both in schools and on site) as well as for others at different educational levels. Thus, this first round of reports is thought to provide a range of biodiversity communications activities which all public bodies can refer to and build upon for the next report.

Objective 1c) Evaluating whether these topics (governance, action, mainstreaming, partnership, communication) are appropriate to guide future biodiversity reporting and actions, stimulate activity and promote delivery by public bodies to meet biodiversity targets.

The review of the 56 identified biodiversity duty reports has suggested that the existing template generally meets the needs of the public bodies in that it provides them with a structure against which they can report all aspects of their biodiversity duty. It enables them to provide information on how they are taking biodiversity into account in their wider organisation planning, the specific activities they are carrying out, any monitoring work, and also any communications and partnership activities. The review of available published reports has identified a wide range of activities, thus public bodies are clearly not restricted in terms of what they are able to report upon when using the existing template.

The template also encourages public bodies to highlight their achievements and record the challenges they expect to face in the next three years. Both of these aspects are considered to be important since they will provide the Scottish Government with details on the areas where progress is being made, and also those areas where there might be difficulties. The sections are also important to the general public reading the report, since they will want to know what the organisation thinks are its greatest achievements, and also what might affect the organisation's ability to continue to promote biodiversity in the future. Encouraging

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[30] Forestry Commission Scotland (2015): The Scottish Forestry Strategy: progress report (2014-15) and future implementation (2015-18).

[31] South Ayrshire Council (2014): Draft statutory biodiversity duty report, 2011-2014.

[32] Scottish Environment Protection Agency: biodiversity duty reporting 2011-2014.

[33] Care Inspectorate (2015): Biodiversity duty reporting 2011-2014.

the organisation to report challenges is also thought to help the reader make a judgement as to whether the organisation is doing enough for biodiversity given its situation. Whilst all public bodies in Scotland have a duty to further the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their functions, it has to be recognised that there will be constraints affecting what each organisation can realistically do (with these constraints varying by type of organisation). For example, many local authority reports have specified funding concerns going forwards, with several noting that they have already lost their biodiversity officer due to resource constraints. Acknowledging any constraints/challenges along with reporting highlights will help provide a balanced report.

It is acknowledged that few organisations provided information on monitoring. Indeed, 13% (7) of reviewed reports detailed findings of monitoring in terms of trends or areas for concern, whilst 21% (12) indicated whether data had been added to the National Biodiversity Network Gateway (NBN) or Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS). However, this was the first round of reports, so it is not unexpected that there was little information on trends given that many actions will only have been implemented relatively recently. This section is likely to become increasingly important over time, and should be retained to stimulate activity and ensure that public bodies are not just implementing actions but are also considering the outcomes of those actions.

Retaining the existing headings within the template will ensure that public bodies do not have to start at the beginning again with a new template for the next reporting round. Indeed, in relation to climate change duty reporting, a considerable proportion of public bodies noted that being more familiar with the template would make next year's reporting process better (Sustainable Scotland Network, 2016a). It is assumed that the same logic could be applied to biodiversity duty reporting. The internet survey also suggested that there was little appetite for change, with only 24% (8) of the 33 respondents who had produced a report and were aware of the template thinking that it needed to be modified. Retaining the existing basic template structure for the next round will also be beneficial in that it will facilitate comparisons between rounds 1 and 2, as well as between public bodies, and it will also help with the monitoring of progress. Furthermore, public bodies that did not publish a report in the first round for whatever reason will be able to refer to the existing reports as examples. This would not be the case if the template were completely changed. The focus of this study has therefore been on the production of appropriate guidance to support the use of the template, rather than making major revisions to the existing template.

There has been some criticism from a few consultees that the biodiversity reporting duty is a box ticking exercise (in particular, the need to provide introductory information and details on mainstreaming). However, it is concluded that from the point of view of the reader, who may know little about the organisation concerned, this information is useful to set the context. It also indicates the types of activity the organisation is likely to be able to carry out. Given that several reports provided similar information in Section 1 (introductory information/governance) and Section 3 (mainstreaming), it is suggested that the mainstreaming section follows on from

Section 1 to minimise the need for repetition. Furthermore, encouraging the public to review the biodiversity duty reports is likely to help ensure that organisations do not see the reports as a box ticking exercise, but as a way of showcasing their biodiversity activities. For this reason, it will be important to ensure that all the reports are easily accessible from one location.

The addition of a further section (Section 7) on targets to the template is considered appropriate given that several public bodies have suggested reporting on how public body activities have contributed/are contributing to Scotland's biodiversity targets. Including this extra section aligns biodiversity duty reporting with the climate change duty reporting process, where Section 7 (Wider influence) covers reporting of relevant targets by public bodies (Sustainable Scotland Network, 2016b). In addition to providing the Scottish Government with valuable information that can be used to assess overall progress towards Scotland's biodiversity targets, such alignment will also benefit those public bodies that noted that they had to meet many reporting requirements, and that it would be easier if these could be made more consistent.

Objective 1d) Providing an overview of the type of activities reported by public bodies to meet the duty identifying good practice and those activities which could be replicated by similar types of public bodies to enable them to fulfil their biodiversity duty.

The review of biodiversity duty reports identified a range of activities that public bodies have carried out and reported upon including (but not limited to):

- Practical activities such as sowing a wildflower meadow, putting up bird boxes, carrying out litter picks on beaches and in public green spaces;

- Face-to-face communications work with schools, 'Friends of...' groups, local residents and those using nature reserves/countryside centres, as well as wider awareness raising through the internet;

- Producing guides on land use and habitat management, for example, on the management of native woodlands; and

- Encouraging their staff to take part in biodiversity related volunteering, for example, planting of trees.

Good practice examples have been identified through categorising the reports by type of public body, and then selecting activities from the different public body types according to whether each activity was considered to have direct links to biodiversity, and importantly, to be replicable by other organisations. Table 4.1 provides some of these good practice examples. The table additionally indicates the main type of resources needed to carry out the activity. This helps show that there are activities that all types of organisation can contribute to, from those with land and biodiversity knowledge, to those who have neither of these but are willing to form partnerships or encourage their staff to volunteer.

Table 4.1: Examples of good practice biodiversity activities

Organisation	Activity reported	Main resources/actions needed
Accountant in Bankruptcy (AiB)	Members of staff with a genuine interest in the environment have voluntarily formed a "green team"/environmental steering group; this team works to actively seek ways to help protect the environment and implement the biodiversity action plan	Staff involvement
Accountant in Bankruptcy (AiB)	Staff members also participate in voluntary activities such as the annual "Kilwinning Spring Clean" which aims to clean up the local area and support the local community. The AiB has also purchased litter picking equipment to help clear litter from the nearby cycle path and enhance the local area	Staff involvement
Care Inspectorate	The Care Inspectorate has an annual photographic competition for staff. This features Scottish wildlife and countryside	Staff involvement
Midlothian Council	Native wildflower grasslands have been created on over 30 hectares of public open space throughout Midlothian. The local community, including groups such as the Scouts and Rotary Club, was invited to suggest sites and participate in the creation of the wildflower grasslands. The areas were sown with seeds native to Scotland and managed to control weeds such as docks. The areas are only cut twice a year and have not only increased biodiversity within the area but also provided substantial financial savings for the council. Wildflower meadows have also been introduced to five local schools as part of the Eco-Schools programme	Land and/or buildings
Midlothian Council	The Midlothian Ranger Service covers three areas including recreation access, education, and biodiversity conservation. A key part of the ranger service is raising awareness of biodiversity through working with volunteers, including the Criminal Justice Team. Volunteers undertake practical conservation activities and training (for example, a herbicide spraying course to remove invasive species) to improve areas throughout Midlothian. The Ranger Service also organises and leads free biodiversity focused activities for local schools and community groups to increase local awareness of biodiversity. Rangers also promote further biodiversity workshops delivered by experts in the field	Staff involvement; biodiversity knowledge
Renfrewshire Council	Renfrewshire Council has held several events to link biodiversity with the cultural and built heritage. Exhibitions have been held at Paisley Museum in addition to other interpretative activities such as Walking in Tannahill's Footsteps, and Paisley's Gaelic Chapel Graveyard. These events were coordinated with the first ever Gaelic Mod in Paisley in 2013 and included bilingual Gaelic/English interpretative signs. All of these were multi-partner and multi-sector initiatives with funding from Historic Scotland, and participation from local history groups, the Tannahill-McDonald Club and Gaelic speaking groups	Partnership working; biodiversity knowledge
Renfrewshire Council	Renfrewshire Council received funding from the CSGN Development Fund to undertake the Network for Newts which	Land and/or buildings;

	saw the creation of 27 shallow scrapes adjacent to the National Cycle Network. The scrapes provide a habitat and spawning habitat created for palmate newts and common frogs. The Sustrans charity is now engaged in a collaborative project to further expand habitats along the NCN and survey newt populations	partnership working
Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)	SEPA has undertaken a variety of practical actions in approximately 19 of their office grounds to improve local biodiversity. Actions have been planned and undertaken by Green Network members and staff volunteers, and include: putting up bird feeders, bird boxes and bat boxes; pollinator friendly native planting; creation of grassland meadows through selective mowing, creation of ponds and having hedgehog hibernation boxes. The activities have improved biodiversity around the offices with several species being spotted including a small blue butterfly, red deer and newts. The activities have also helped to build up the capacity of staff across the offices to undertake biodiversity action	Land and/or buildings
Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)	iRecord is an online site for recording, managing and sharing wildlife sightings. Staff members use a bespoke form on iRecord for uploading wildlife sightings at SEPA offices. This allows SEPA to monitor biodiversity improvements around the office grounds and engage staff in the activities undertaken	Staff involvement
Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)	Between 2011 and 2014, SEPA was a partner in the organisation and running of several SNH Sharing Good Practice Events, including topics such as: Invasive Non-Native Species, Biosecurity, Ecosystem Services for Land Managers, and Citizen Science and Environmental Monitoring	Partnership working; biodiversity knowledge
Scottish Water	Scottish Water launched a volunteer programme in 2011 which entitles staff to two days paid leave to participate in volunteering activities focused on education, environment and the local community. By 2014 2,000 employees had taken part in the programme. Volunteer projects include: working with countryside rangers at Dean Castle Country Park, beach cleans to remove litter from the coastline and beach litter survey to inform the Marine Conservation Society of possible litter sources, and participation at the Friends of Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park 'Make a Difference Day' to help with national park repairs. Scottish Water has also produced a map to disseminate the range of volunteer work they have undertaken	Staff involvement
Scottish Water	Scottish Water has developed a range of information packs and visited schools to give talks on the water industry, including how it can impact upon the environment and wildlife	Biodiversity knowledge
Scottish Water	Scottish Water has developed a strong liaison framework with SNH, as well as participation in "sharing good practice" events to help build capacity and knowledge on biodiversity issues and ensure that the core functions of Scottish Water are undertaken in a manner that allows them to further the conservation of biodiversity	Partnership working
Skills Development	Skills Development Scotland (SDS) has a network of voluntary Green Champions with approximately 60 champions in SDS	Biodiversity knowledge

Scotland	offices across Scotland. This network helps decrease the environmental impacts of SDS offices, for example by encouraging staff members to print fewer documents	
Skills Development Scotland	SDS also encourages staff members to undertake volunteering opportunities such as native tree planting. In 2012 the property and facilities team spent a day in Teaghlach Wood in Perthshire and planted over 50 native trees	Staff involvement

Note: information has been obtained from published biodiversity duty reports

The above examples, along with a few additional ones, are also included within the guidance document.

4.2.2 Objective 2

To provide an assessment of the contribution that the Biodiversity Duty is making to the delivery of the "2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity". This assessment could include the Biodiversity Duty activities in the context of/contribution to a) the Six Big Steps for Nature, b) Aichi Targets

Activities reported by public bodies in the 56 reviewed biodiversity duty reports were found to contribute to all 20 of the key steps from the Biodiversity Strategy that were deemed relevant to some or a majority of public bodies. The steps that most public bodies provided evidence of contributing to were:

- Establish plans and decisions about land use based on an understanding of ecosystems. Take full account of land use impacts on the ecosystems services that underpin social, economic and environmental health;

- Government and public bodies, including SNH, SEPA and FCS, will work together towards a shared agenda for action to restore ecosystem health at a catchment-scale across Scotland; and

- Support local authorities and communities to improve local environments and enhance biodiversity using green space and green networks, allowing nature to flourish and so enhancing the quality of life for people who live there.

For each of the above steps, at least 60% of the 56 reports included activities that might contribute.

Many public bodies are contributing to these steps perhaps because the activities required are relatively simple, and can be undertaken by the majority of (if not most) organisations. For example, a considerable number of public bodies reported that they had produced plans and strategies that took account of biodiversity. Many provided examples where partnership working had taken place to promote the conservation of biodiversity, whilst a similar number also reported on activities where they had helped to improve local environments and green spaces, whether this was by running an event to raise awareness, or encouraging their staff to volunteer to improve a local green area.

Key steps where there appeared to be less of a contribution from public bodies included those which required specific habitats or land uses, or necessitated public bodies to be in a position where they owned/managed land. These steps included:

- Ensure that measures taken forward under the Common Agricultural Policy encourage land managers to develop and retain the diversity of wildlife habitats and landscape features;

- Achieve good environmental status for Scottish seas;

- Integrate protected areas policy with action for wider habitats to combat fragmentation and restore key habitats; and

- Ensure that biodiversity and ecosystem objectives are fully integrated into flood risk management plans, and restore wetland habitats and woodlands to provide sustainable flood management.

For each of these four steps, less than 15% of reviewed reports included activities thought to be relevant. This is perhaps because these steps require specific habitat types/land uses or are only available to public bodies that have the opportunity to carry out practical activities relating to habitat management.

The full results of the assessment are provided in Annex 7. Note that no attempt was made to determine the strength of the contribution towards the targets.

The study also linked the key steps from the biodiversity strategy to the Six Big Steps for nature (from the route map) and the Aichi targets (see Annex 8). Given that the assessment of the 56 reports has indicated that public bodies are contributing to all 20 of the relevant key steps from the biodiversity strategy, this means that they are also contributing to all six of the big steps for nature from the route map.

In addition, the biodiversity duty reports provide evidence that public bodies in Scotland are contributing to 11 of the 20 Aichi targets. It should be noted that the existence of the biodiversity duty and any awareness raising around it is likely to contribute towards a further Aichi target, namely Target 1: by 2020, at the latest, people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably[13]. The eight Aichi targets to which the reviewed reports did not appear to contribute cover targets relating to policy and decision making by national governments, and targets requiring specialist knowledge or specific ecosystems that may not be relevant to Scottish public bodies. It is possible that a few public bodies (for example, the Scottish Government) have carried out and reported upon activities that contribute towards some of these additional targets, but it has not been possible to assess every reported activity against every target.

4.2.3 Objective 3

To assess why some public bodies failed to submit a report and identify any actions that the Scottish Government can take to assist them in the future.

This study has identified various reasons why some public bodies failed to submit a biodiversity duty report. A list of these reasons is provided in Box 4-1.

Box 4.1: Reasons why some public bodies failed to submit a biodiversity duty report

- Lack of awareness of the legislation and the need to report (with several public bodies not being aware of having been in receipt of any information on the reporting duty)

- Belief that the requirement was not relevant to them (for example, because they felt their business did not directly relate to biodiversity, or they did not have any outside space in which to implement biodiversity actions). One public body also thought that the duty was focused on land usage which was not applicable to their organisation

- General fatigue relating to reporting with the need to report being seen as a box ticking exercise

- The individual responsible for reporting leaving the organisation with no-one taking their place

- Prioritisation of work against the organisation's core functions, with meeting the biodiversity duty not being seen as one of these (having the capacity to do everything was an issue raised by another public body)

- Fear/uncertainty relating to the reporting requirement, and a lack of clarity/understanding in terms of what is required

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The internet survey and telephone interviews identified a number of actions that the Scottish Government could take to assist public bodies with biodiversity duty reporting. The following bullets provide a summary of the suggested actions, drawn from both the survey and the interviews. The actions are organised according to the reporting barrier/issue that they are addressing:

Issue to address: awareness

- Inform public bodies that they have a duty to produce the report in a timely manner. This also includes contacting the correct person and making it clear that this is a statutory requirement, by using more forceful language than has been used previously (note that in relation to this point, it was recognised by many of the public bodies themselves that it is not necessarily easy to find the right person to contact, and that a database of individual contacts for the biodiversity duty might be needed);

- Publish progress reports on the overall condition of biodiversity, highlighting areas of improvement and good work being carried out. This report could be in the form of a yearly newsletter;

- Help raise the profile of biodiversity within other departments within public bodies (this will help biodiversity and facilities managers/officers to implement biodiversity actions); and

- Promote partnership working and joined up thinking (it is better for budgets and biodiversity if things are done together rather than biodiversity being added on afterwards).

Issue to address: advice and guidance (report writing)

- Provide a basic structure for the report and areas where it can be modified dependent on the needs of the different types of public body (but note that it is good to retain a similar overall structure to the existing template to allow for comparison); and

- Provide training and/or a name of a support individual from the Scottish Government to help public bodies with the reporting.

Issue to address: advice and guidance (practical/activities)

- Provide an opportunity for shared learning, including annual events and an online forum where people can talk about their activities and ask questions;

- Publish and keep up to date details on resources and other information;

- Possibly suggest consultants that could help smaller organisations;

- Provide guidance as to what each type of public body should be doing; and

- The Scottish Government could set targets in relation to the "2020 Challenge" for each type of public body.

Issue to address: feedback following post report production

- Acknowledge receipt of reports;

- Publish reports in one location. Include the actual reports rather than the links because these can go out of date;

- Provide a traffic light system to encourage completion, and show which organisations have met the requirement;

- Review each round of reporting to evaluate the overall biodiversity picture, how actions have contributed towards the strategy and the next steps. This will give public bodies something to aim for; and

- Provide individual feedback such as that provided for the climate change/carbon reporting.

4.2.4 Objective 4

To draw conclusions and recommendations on requirements for future reporting, through provision of improved guidance and instructions and development of the next reporting template. These should take into account 'Scotland's Biodiversity – a Route Map to 2020'

This study has developed guidance and a revised template (currently in draft format). The guidance and template take into account the various comments made by public bodies during this study, in particular:

- The provision of example biodiversity actions carried out by public bodies;

- The inclusion of a flow chart to direct public bodies to parts of the guidance that are likely to be of most relevance to them, according to their level of opportunity to undertake biodiversity actions;

- The inclusion of links to existing reports produced by public bodies with a range of opportunities to carry out biodiversity related activities[34]. This ensures that the guidance is appropriate for both those public bodies with land/assets and some knowledge of biodiversity, and for those who may not own any land and do not consider biodiversity to be part of their core functions;

- The addition of a section for each public body to record their contribution to the 20 key steps from the Biodiversity Strategy that have been deemed most relevant to public bodies. Public bodies are also encouraged to link their activities to the Six Big Steps for Nature as outlined in the route map; and

- The inclusion of a section on additional resources providing further links to help public bodies to better understand biodiversity and what they can do.

The guidance and revised template is provided as a separate document.

4.3 Policy recommendations

This study has developed several policy recommendations including:

Recommendation 1: the Scottish Government should publish all the biodiversity duty reports on their own website (rather than including a link to another organisation's website).

Evidence for the recommendation: consultees are keen to look at other organisation's reports to gain inspiration for their own biodiversity activities. Having them in one place would facilitate this. It would also ensure that all the reports are easily accessible to the general public. This would help raise awareness of the requirement, and encourage comparisons between public bodies, which in turn could stimulate them to carry out more biodiversity activities.

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[34] See Recommendation 1, which suggests that the reports themselves are hosted on the Scottish Government's own website. This will ensure that the links provided in the guidance do not become broken.

Furthermore, where links to other organisations' websites are used, these links may become broken if information is moved. It is acknowledged that a list of the published reports that the Scottish Government was informed about was published on the Biodiversity Scotland website (http://www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk/duty/work/results/). However, the study team has not been able to find one of the biodiversity duty reports, since the link no longer works. Hosting the reports on its own website would enable the Scottish Government to ensure that the reports are published as per the requirement of the WANE Act. The guidance document could then link to the biodiversity duty reports on the Scottish Government website, thus ensuring that the links remained functional.

Recommendation 2: acknowledge receipt of all report links/reports from public bodies

Evidence for the recommendation: the internet survey and telephone interviews with public bodies that had produced a report raised the issue of feedback. Several respondents mentioned that they had not received any response from the Scottish Government when they sent in their report/a link to the report. It is recognised that there is insufficient time and resources for the Scottish Government to go through all the reports and provide each public body with detailed feedback. However, sending an acknowledgement to public bodies when they send in their reports would help ensure that they felt their efforts were being recognised.

Recommendation 3: add biodiversity duty reports to the list of documents on the Model Publication Scheme. This scheme is operated by the Information Commissioner and helps public bodies to identify what they need to publish.

Evidence for the recommendation: this point was made by an interviewee who thought that it would help to raise awareness of the need to report. Many of those public bodies that did not publish a report cited lack of awareness as the main reason. Therefore, the use of a pre-existing scheme to help inform public bodies of the need to report is assumed to be a relatively simple way of raising the profile of biodiversity duty reporting.

Recommendation 4: raise awareness of the requirement to carry out biodiversity activities and report on them amongst the general public (e.g. by issuing bulletins to the news page of the Scottish Government website around reporting time).

Evidence for the recommendation: some interviewees felt that the reporting process was just a box ticking exercise. Raising awareness amongst the public would help create an audience for the reports, thus encouraging public bodies to carry out activities and report upon them instead of just viewing the process as a reporting exercise with no other function. This would help ensure that the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act and the WANE Act were delivered in tandem as originally intended.

Recommendation 5: improve communication with public bodies about the biodiversity duty, in particular by providing them with an annual update to ensure that biodiversity remains on each organisation's agenda every year. Reminder emails could also be sent out two to three months before reports are due.

Evidence for the recommendation: several organisations reported that they were not aware of having received any communication from the Scottish Government on biodiversity duty reporting. There are likely to be several reasons for this, including: the individual sent the communication had left the organisation; no one particular person was responsible for communications about biodiversity, so any message was ignored; and biodiversity was not seen as a priority or was deemed irrelevant to the organisation, so again any communications were ignored. It is recognised that obtaining the contact details for the most relevant person is difficult for some organisations, in particular, those that do not have a specific biodiversity officer, or indeed any named individual responsible for environmental management. However, by providing annual updates and reminder emails, (even if some of these go to a general email) it is thought that the profile of biodiversity duty reporting will be raised. This will ensure that more people are aware, and subsequently meet, the requirement.

Indeed, the contact process used to invite people to complete the survey for this study (one initial invite followed by two reminder emails if required) has already raised awareness of the requirement amongst several organisations who are now putting in place procedures to ensure they report in future.

Recommendation 6: publish guidance on the reporting process that includes examples of reports and activities from different types of public body. Ensure this guidance is updated for future reporting rounds as good practice develops.

Evidence for the recommendation: many survey respondents and also interviewees requested examples of what reports should look like, and what activities they should carry out. Any guidance or similar support provided to public bodies should therefore include examples so that public bodies have a better idea of what the Scottish Government is expecting, and what they can actually do (especially if biodiversity is not included amongst their core functions).

4.4 Suggestions for the Scottish Government to consider

The study has also developed a number of suggestions that the Scottish Government may wish to consider. Some of these suggestions have come from consultation (both the survey responses and telephone interviews), whilst others have been developed by the project team during the course of the study. These suggestions are as follows:

- Request that each public body nominates a biodiversity duty report contact. Maintain a database of the contacts for each public body, and ensure that regularly communications/updates are sent to the nominated individuals;

- Setting up an internet page to list all public bodies along with their biodiversity duty reporting 'status'. This could use a traffic light based system, with green indicating the public body was up to date, amber showing the report was due, and red indicating that a report had not been produced.   The use of a traffic light system was suggested by one of the survey respondents. Including the date by when the next biodiversity duty report was due would also be useful, especially as going forwards, not all public bodies will be expected to report at the same time (since the three yearly period applies from January 2012 or from the date the organisation came into being); and

- Consider including biodiversity duty reporting within the best value toolkits (potentially the one related to sustainability). Several public bodies have made mention of these toolkits within their published biodiversity duty reports, with South Lanarkshire indicating that they are looking to produce a biodiversity assessment toolkit based on the Best Value Toolkit for Sustainability (South Lanarkshire Council, nd).

5 References

Audit Scotland (2010): Protecting and improving Scotland's environment. Prepared for the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission, January 2010, accessed at: http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/uploads/docs/report/2010/nr_100114_environment_overview.pdf on 23rd September 2016.

Scottish Government (2015): Scotland's biodiversity: a route map to 2020, Edinburgh, Scottish Government.

Scottish Government (2013): 2020 Challenge for Scotland's biodiversity: A strategy for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in Scotland, Edinburgh, Scottish Government.

SNH (2011): Biodiversity and public bodies – the biodiversity duty explained, accessed at: http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/B836048.pdf on 23rd September 2016.

SNIFFER (2009): Scoping Biodiversity Guidance for Public Bodies, accessed at: http://www.sniffer.org.uk/files/8913/4183/7991/UKCC12_FINAL_Report_password_protected.pdf on 23rd September 2016.

South Lanarkshire Council (nd): Biodiversity Duty Implementation Plan, accessed at: http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/6774/biodiversity_duty_implementation_plan on 23rd September 2016.

Sustainable Scotland Network (2016a): Public sector climate change duties reporting 2014/15, Functional review, A review of the reporting process to identify potential improvements, March 2016.

Sustainable Scotland Network (2016b): Public bodies climate change duties reporting 2014/2015, Analysis report, Analysis of the information provided in the 2014/15 reports, April 2016.

Annex 1 Evaluation matrix

Area		Evaluation questions	Indicators	Information sources
Summative	Reports (covering the actions aspect of the evaluation)	Have reports been produced?	Number of reports obtained	SNH website
		What approaches have been used?	Number by type of approach (use of template, standalone report, part of wider report, etc.)	Survey of organisations
		How do these differ between organisations?		Review of reports
			Number by type of organisation	Analysis of data extracted from review of reports
		What actions have been reported?		
			Types of action, by number and outcome/expected outcome	Interviews with organisations
	Lasting impact (covering the mainstreaming aspect of the evaluation)	Do the reports explain how biodiversity has been incorporated into corporate policy, plans and projects?	Changes to corporate management (policy, plans, projects) identified	Analysis of evidence from review of reports on activities undertaken to incorporate biodiversity measures into other areas
			Steps taken to incorporate biodiversity measures into other areas	
Summative	Lasting impact (covering the contribution of the activities undertaken to delivery of the 2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity)	What contribution is the Biodiversity Duty making to delivery of biodiversity targets *(targets to be specified)*	Extent to which principles in relation to biodiversity conservation are being translated into actions	Analysis of evidence from review of reports on actions taken and outcomes from those actions
			Number of actions identified and being undertaken by organisations	Survey and interviews
			Outcomes or results of monitoring of impacts of actions (where available)	
			Details of trends or areas of concern as highlighted by the monitoring data	
Formative	Management & structure (covering the governance aspect of the evaluation)	Do the reports explain how organisations are leading and managing biodiversity matters?	Number of organisations with easy-to-understand decision-making structures (highlighted in their reports)	Analysis of evidence from review of reports on governance issues
				Survey and interviews
		Are decision-making structures given?	Types of decision-making structure	

Area		Evaluation questions	Indicators	Information sources
	Effective delivery (covering the partnership aspect of the evaluation)	Do the reports explain how organisations are working with other stakeholders to deliver actions?	Number and type of organisations involved in partnerships	Analysis of evidence from review of reports on partnership issues
			Number and type of actions undertaken in partnerships	Survey and interviews
				Review of information from web-links
			Extent to which partnerships have achieved their aims	
			Number of web links to further information on partnerships	
	Dissemination (covering the communications aspect of the evaluation)	Do the reports explain how organisations are raising awareness, building capacity and working with communities?	Number and type of actions undertaken to raise awareness and communicate about biodiversity conservation	Analysis of evidence from review of reports on partnership issues
				Survey and interviews
			Number and type of communication activities undertaken	
			Number and type of capacity building initiatives undertaken	
	Lessons learnt and recommendations	What examples are there of best practice?	Number, type and general nature of best practice examples	Analysis of evidence from review of reports
	(drawing together the results of the evaluation to identify best practice examples)	Can these examples be used by other organisations to help them replicate activities so they can better meet their biodiversity duty?	Governance: examples of leadership	Survey and interviews
			Action: well-presented examples of actions that are delivering positive outcomes	
			Mainstreaming: example of approaches used to mainstream	
			Partnership: examples of partnership and how that partnership is reported	
Formative			Communication: examples of awareness raising, capacity building and working with communities	

Area	Evaluation questions	Indicators	Information sources
Lessons learnt and recommendations (drawing together the results of the evaluation to identify what needs to change to encourage more effective reporting)	What aspects of the existing guidance should be retained? How do reporting requirements need to change to encourage more organisations to report? Are all public bodies aware of the need to report? How do the guidance and template need to be revised to make reporting easier and more effective? How can reporting be used to stimulate further activity and promote greater delivery of biodiversity actions? How can reports be used to further increase the potential to meet biodiversity targets?	Key areas (governance, action, mainstreaming, partnership, communication) addressed by organisations that have submitted a report Types of impact/barrier encountered (by type of organisation) Type of reporting issue/difficulty faced (by type of organisation) Opportunities to reduce impacts, barriers, issues and difficulties	Analysis of evidence from review of reports and development of best practice examples Survey and interviews

Formative

Annex 2 Identified biodiversity duty reports (covering 2012-2014)

Public body	Name of document	Embedded or standalone?	Web link[35]
Aberdeen City Council	Biodiversity Reporting Duty 2012-2014	Standalone	https://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/web/files/Natural_Heritage/ACC_Biodiversity_Duty_Report_2014.pdf
Aberdeenshire Council	Aberdeenshire Council - Biodiversity Duty Reporting – December 2014	Standalone	https://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/media/6211/2011-2015biodiversitydutyreportingdec2014.pdf
Accountant in Bankruptcy	AiB Sustainability Report 2014 - 2015	Embedded	http://www.aib.gov.uk/sites/default/files/aib_-_environmental_performance_-_sustainability_report_2014-15.pdf
Angus Council	Statutory Biodiversity Duty Report On Delivery 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2014	Standalone	www.angus.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/1201/statutory_biodiversity_duty_%E2%80%92_report_on_delivery.pdf
Argyll and Bute Council	Argyll and Bute Council. Biodiversity Duty Reporting 2011-2014	Standalone	https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/argyll_and_bute_council_biodiversity_duty_reporting_december_2014_version_3_2.pdf
Care Inspectorate	Biodiversity Duty Reporting 2011-14	Standalone	http://www.careinspectorate.com/images/documents/2577/Care%20Inspectorate%20report%20on%20Biodiversity%20Duty%202011-14.pdf
Children's Hearings Scotland	Annual Report April 2014 - March 2015	Embedded	http://www.chscotland.gov.uk/media/97660/chs-annual-report-2014-15-v10.pdf
City of Edinburgh Council	Edinburgh Biodiversity Duty Report 2012-14	Standalone	http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/download/meetings/id/45061/item_no_77_-_edinburgh_biodiversity_duty_report_2012-14

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[35] Live as of 5th May 2016. Please note that these links may become inactive or no longer function if changes are made to the webpages.

Clackmannanshire Council	Clackmannanshire Council. Report To Enterprise And Environment Committee. Climate Change Update	Embedded	http://www.clacksweb.org.uk/document/meeting/227/608/4688.pdf
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	Biodiversity Duty Delivery Plan 2010 – 2014	Standalone	http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/biodiversity/duty.asp
Dumfries and Galloway	Dumfries and Galloway Council Biodiversity Duty Report 2012-2014	Standalone	Web link not available at time of finalising this report
East Ayrshire Council	East Ayrshire Council Biodiversity Duty Report 2012 – 2014	Standalone	https://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/Resources/PDF/B/Biodiversity-Duty-Report-2014-Appendix.pdf
East Dunbartonshire Council	Statutory Biodiversity Duty Delivery Report January 2012 – December 2014	Standalone	https://www.eastdunbarton.gov.uk/filedepot_download/17023/891
East Lothian Council	East Lothian Biodiversity 2014 Fulfilling the Council's obligation to report on actions it takes to conserve biodiversity	Standalone	http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/9052/biodiversity_report_2014-east_lothian_council
East Renfrewshire Council	East Renfrewshire Council Biodiversity Duty Report 2014	Standalone	http://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=13410&p=0
Falkirk Council	Falkirk Council Biodiversity Duty Report 2011-2014	Standalone	https://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/environment/docs/biodiversity/Biodiversity%20duty%20report.pdf?v=201412171040

Fife Council	Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 Biodiversity Duty Report Fife Council 2012-2014	Standalone	http://publications.1fife.org.uk/uploadfiles/publications/c64_BiodiversityDutyReport-FifeCouncil-2012-2014.pdf
Forestry Commission Scotland	The Scottish Forestry Strategy: Progress report (2014-15) and Future Implementation (2015-18)	Embedded	http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/images/corporate/pdf/sfs-implementation-plan-2015-2016.pdf.
Glasgow City Council	Glasgow City Council Biodiversity Duty Report (2011/12, 2012/2013 and 2013/14)	Standalone	https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=32784&p=0
Highland Council	Highland Council Biodiversity Duty Report 2014	Standalone	http://www.highland.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/12147/2014_biodiversity_duty_report.pdf
Inverclyde Council	Biodiversity Report 2011-14	Standalone	https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/assets/attach/1556/Biodiversity-Report-2011-14.pdf
Midlothian Council	First 'Biodiversity Report' on Pursuance of the Duty Under Section 1 of the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 ('Duty to further the conservation of biodiversity')	Standalone	https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwi41vvfg6XPAhWjLcAKHdZWBjoQFggiMAE&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.midlothian.gov.uk%2Fdownload%2Fdownloads%2Fid%2F582%2Fbiodiversity_report_november_2016.pdf&usg=AFQjCNG4X0HDNFPQq_uCkNTMwEU7564hpw&bvm=bv.133700528,d.d2s
Moray Council	Report on Biodiversity Duty	Standalone	http://www.moray.gov.uk/downloads/file96715.pdf
National Library of Scotland	National Library of Scotland Public Sector Sustainability Report 2012-2013	Embedded	http://www.nls.uk/media/1094643/2013-2014-nls-public-sector-sustainability.pdf

National Museums of Scotland	Biodiversity Report (2011-2014)	Standalone	http://www.nms.ac.uk/media/772310/biodiversity-report-2011-14-for-website.pdf
NHS Grampian	NHS Grampian Biodiversity Impact Statement	Standalone	https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwi12POO-ZzLAhVBoRQKHZi3AS0QFggjMAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nhsgrampian.org%2Fgrampianfoi%2Ffiles%2FNHSG_BIODIVERSITY_IMPACT.doc&usg=AFQjCNHvSbSGv1dw8IuEQtWA6VUNZQe_Iw&sig2=OGh8KiPNb7DlHxRk5xg7Yg&bvm=bv.115339255,d.d24
NHS Shetland	NHS Shetland Biodiversity Activity Report 2011 – 2014	Standalone	http://www.shb.scot.nhs.uk/board/policies/ActivityReportNHSShetlandBiodiversity2011-2014.pdf
North Ayrshire Council	North Ayrshire Council: Reporting on the Scottish Biodiversity Duty 2011-14. January 2015	Standalone	http://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/Documents/CorporateServices/Finance/reporting-on-biodiversity-duty.pdf
North Lanarkshire Council	North Lanarkshire Council Biodiversity Duty Report 2011 -2014	Standalone	http://www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=16604&p=0
Orkney Islands Council	Orkney Islands Council Biodiversity Duty Report 2012-2014	Standalone	http://www.orkney.gov.uk/Files/Planning/Biodiversity/Biodiversity_Duty_Report_2014.pdf
Perth and Kinross Council	Perth and Kinross Council. Statutory Biodiversity Duty. Report on Delivery 1st January 2012 to 31st December 2014)	Standalone	http://www.pkc.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=28918&p=0
Renfrewshire Council	Renfrewshire Council Biodiversity Duty Report 2014	Standalone	http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/media/1246/Renfrewshire-Council-Biodiversity-Duty-Report/pdf/pt-BiodiversityDutyReport_FV.pdf

Risk Management Authority	Risk Management Authority Biodiversity Duty Reporting 2011 - 2014	Standalone	http://www.rmascotland.gov.uk/index.php/download_file/view/1157/791/
Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh	Biodiversity Report 2011-2014	Standalone	http://www.rbge.org.uk/assets/files/about_us/Corporate_Info/RBGE%20Biodiversity%20Duty%20Report%202011-14%20v1compressed%20copy.pdf
Scottish Borders Council	Scottish Borders Council Biodiversity Duty Report	Standalone	https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwj2tJmphKXPAhUUOsAKHVXHDPAQFggcMAA&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.scotborders.gov.uk%2Fdownload%2Fdownloads%2Fid%2F2211%2Fbiodiversity_duty_delivery_report.pdf&usg=AFQjCNG5ZJvdP50rzX1g4evmHZB0Fx04Eg&bvm=bv.133700528,d.d2s
Scottish Canals	Scottish Canals Report on the Scottish Biodiversity Duty for 2011-14	Standalone	https://www.scottishcanals.co.uk/corporate/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2015/12/Scottish-Canals-report-on-the-Scottish-Biodiversity-Duty-2011-14.pdf
Scottish Children's Reporter Administration	SCRA Sustainability Report 2014/15	Embedded	http://www.scra.mtcserver3.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/SCRA-Sustainability-Report-2014-15.pdf
Scottish Court Service	Scottish Court Service Annual Report and Accounts 2014-15	Embedded	http://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/docs/default-source/SCS-Annual-Report/scs-annual-report-accounts---2014-15---final.pdf?sfvrsn=2
Scottish Enterprise	Biodiversity duty report 2011 - 2014	Standalone	http://www.scottish-enterprise.com/knowledge-hub/articles/publication/biodiversity-report
Scottish Funding Council	Annual Report and accounts 2013 - 14	Embedded	http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/ReportsandPublications/SFC_annual_report_and_accounts_2013-14.pdf
Scottish Government	The Scottish Government Biodiversity Duty Report 2012 - 2014	Standalone	http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Environment/Wildlife-Habitats/biodiversity/duty
Scottish Housing Regulator	Environmental Strategy 2015 –2018	Embedded	https://scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/Environmental%20Strategy%202015-2018.pdf

Scottish Law Commission	Environmental policy	Embedded	http://www.scotlawcom.gov.uk/about-us/environmental-policy/
Scottish Legal Complaints Commission	SLCC Reporting on the Scottish Biodiversity Duty:2011to 2014	Standalone	https://www.scottishlegalcomplaints.org.uk/media/57375/slcc_biodiversity_report.pdf
Scottish Road Works Commissioner	Biodiversity Report 2011 - 2014	Standalone	https://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0 ahUKEwju2Yfj6Z_LAhUBPxQKHQQ6B5YQFggfMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.roadworksscotland.g ov.uk%2Fnmsruntime%2Fsaveasdialog.aspx%3FlID%3D1546%26sID%3D389&usg=AFQjCNFlwS7Z1zu agM2WhaoiSsB-m2ehQg&sig2=VJdft61XivOR_y5S2GaimQ
Scottish Water	Sustainability Report 2014	Embedded	http://www.scottishwater.co.uk/about-us/corporate-responsibility/climate-change/climate-change-documents/sustainability-report-2014
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency: Biodiversity Duty Reporting 2011 - 2014	Standalone	http://www.sepa.org.uk/media/142667/sepa_biodiversity_duty_report-20112014_with_nontechnical_summary.pdf
Skills Development Scotland	Sustainability Report 2013/2014 October 2014	Embedded	https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/36827/sustainability_report1_2013_14.pdf
SNH	SNH Annual Report and Accounts 2014/15	Embedded	http://www.snh.gov.uk/publications-data-and-research/publications/search-the-catalogue/publication-detail/?id=2393
South Ayrshire	South Ayrshire Council Draft Statutory Biodiversity Duty Report2011 -2014	Standalone	http://www.south-ayrshire.gov.uk/sustainable-development/biodiversity%20duty%20reporting%20new%20-%20lj4%20final%20draft.doc
South Lanarkshire Council	South Lanarkshire Council Biodiversity Duty Implementation Plan	Standalone	http://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/6774/biodiversity_duty_implementation_plan
Stirling Council	Stirling Council's Biodiversity Duty Report 2014	Standalone	http://www.stirling.gov.uk/ documents/stirling-council-biodiversity-duty-report.pdf

Student Awards Agency for Scotland	Annual Reports and Accounts 2013-2014	Embedded	http://www.saas.gov.uk/about_us/corporate_publications.htm
Water Industry Commission for Scotland	Biodiversity Report 2011 - 2014	Standalone	http://www.watercommission.co.uk/UserFiles/Documents/Biodiversity%20Report%202011-2014%20%281%29.pdf
West Dunbartonshire Council	West Dunbartonshire Council Biodiversity Duty Report 2015	Standalone	http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/4308167/wdc-biodiversity-report-2015.pdf
West Lothian Council	West Lothian Report on the Scottish Biodiversity Duty 2011 -14	Standalone	http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/6171/West-Lothian-Report-on-the-Scottish-Biodiversity-Duty-2011---2014/pdf/ReportontheScottishBiodiversityDuty2011-14.pdf

Annex 3 Internet based survey

The questions for the internet survey are provided below. Note that survey logic was used to ensure that public bodies were only presented with questions relevant to their situation.

Survey

In 2004, the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act placed a duty on public sector bodies in Scotland to further the conservation of biodiversity with the proper exercise of their functions. This duty aimed to connect people with the environment and to manage biodiversity in the wider environment, not just in protected sites.

The Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Act 2011 (WANE Act) came into force in January 2012. The WANE Act requires public bodies to report on their compliance with their biodiversity duty every three years.

This survey is part of a study commissioned by the Scottish Government to evaluate biodiversity duty reporting. We are interested in whether your organisation has published a report, your opinions on the reporting process, and any suggestions you may have to improve it. We will use the survey responses to evaluate the previous round of reporting and to identify changes that may be needed to help organisations meet their reporting duty. The results will feed into our final report.

All answers will be kept anonymous.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

If you have any queries or any other comments, please contact Jenny Miller [email].

All organisations

1. Please select your organisation type:

- Advisory national non-departmental public body (NDPB)
- Commissioner/ombudsman
- Executive agency
- Executive national non-departmental public body (NDPB)
- Health body
- Local authority
- Non-ministerial department
- Other significant national body
- Public corporation
- Tribunal

- Other (please describe type)

2. Please indicate your organisation's size:

- Micro (less than 10 staff members)
- Small (10 to 49 staff members)
- Medium (50 to 249 staff members)
- Large (250 or more staff members)

3. Has your organisation completed a biodiversity duty report?

- Yes [GO TO Q4]
- No [GO TO Q14]
- Don't know (GO TO Q14)

Organisations that have answered Yes to question 1

4. Is the report standalone or embedded in another report?

- Standalone
- Embedded in another report.
- If your biodiversity duty report is embedded in another report please provide the name of the report

5. Is your report publically available online?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Please provide a link to your report

6. We are interested in finding out whether organisations produced and published their own reports, or sought the assistance of another organisation. Please select two of the following statements:

- We wrote the report
- We published the report
- We instructed another organisation to write the report
- We instructed another organisation to publish the report

7. Are you aware of the template to assist public bodies with their biodiversity reporting duty?

- Yes [GO TO Q8]
- No [GO TO Q13]

8. Was the biodiversity duty guidance/template used in the production of your report?

- Yes – we/our contractor followed the template
- Partially – we/our contractor modified the template to produce our report
- No – we/our contractor did not use the template
- Don't know

9. Do you think that the template needs to be modified?

- Yes [GO TO Q10]
- No [GO TO Q13]
- Do not know [GO TO Q13]

10. What sections do you think need to be revised in the template? (Select all that apply)

- Section 1 - Introductory information about your organisation and biodiversity
- Section 2 - Action taken to improve biodiversity conservation on the ground
- Section 3 - Mainstreaming
- Section 4 - Monitoring
- Section 5 - Partnership working and Biodiversity Communications
- Section 6 - Biodiversity Highlights of the Past Year

Please specify how you would like each chosen section to change (to help our analysis, please state the name of the section and then the change)

11. Are there any additional sections you would like to see added to the template?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please provide further details

12. Do you think there needs to be any other changes to the template? (e.g. more detail, example text, more signposting to information)

- Yes

- No

If yes, please provide further details

13. Beyond the production of the template, are there any other actions (e.g. setting up an online forum for sharing of best practice) that the Scottish Government could take to assist you with biodiversity duty reporting?

- Yes [GO TO "ANY OTHER COMMENTS"]

- No [GO TO "ANY OTHER COMMENTS"]

If yes, please provide further details

Organisations that have answered No to question 1

14. Are you aware of the requirement to report on your organisation's compliance with the biodiversity duty every three years?

- Yes

- No

15. What were the main reasons for not reporting?

Select all that are applicable:

- Not aware of the need for the report

- Lack of resources (staff, etc.)

- Lack of time to prepare the report

- Budget constraints

- Lack of expertise/no designated biodiversity officer

- No biodiversity actions to report on

- Already produce a report that is similar

- Other priorities took precedence

- Other

- Comment box for further details

16. Are you aware of the template to assist public bodies with their biodiversity reporting duty?

- Yes [GO TO Q17]

- No [GO TO Q21]

17. Do you think that the template needs to be modified?

- Yes [GO TO Q18]
- No [GO TO Q21]
- Don't know [GO TO Q21]

18. What sections do you think need to be revised in the template? (Select all that apply)

- Section 1 - Introductory information about your organisation and biodiversity
- Section 2 - Action taken to improve biodiversity conservation on the ground
- Section 3 - Mainstreaming
- Section 4 - Monitoring
- Section 5 - Partnership working and Biodiversity Communications
- Section 6 - Biodiversity Highlights of the Past Year

Please specify how you would like each chosen section to change (to help our analysis, please state the name of the section and then the change)

19. Are there any additional sections you would like to see added?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please provide further details

20. Do you think there needs to be any other changes to the template? (e.g. more detail, example text, more signposting to information)

- Yes
- No

If yes, please provide further details

21. Beyond the production of the template, are there any other actions (e.g. setting up an online forum for sharing of best practice) that the Scottish Government could take to assist you with biodiversity duty reporting?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please provide further details

All organisations

Any other comments:

Please provide the name of your organisation (your name will only be used for analysis purposes. All responses will be kept anonymous)

Would you be willing for us to contact you to further discuss biodiversity duty reporting?

- Yes
- No

Please provide your contact details

- Name:
- Email:
- Phone:

Thank you for completing this survey. Your responses will be kept anonymous.

Annex 4 Scottish public bodies (based on the National Public Bodies Directory)

	Public Body Name	Status
Executive non-departmental public body (NDPB)	Accounts Commission for Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Architecture and Design Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Bòrd na Gàidhlig	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Cairngorms National Park Authority	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Care Inspectorate	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Children's Hearings Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Creative Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Crofting Commission	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Highlands and Islands Enterprise	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Historic Environment Scotland	Registered as a Scottish charity on 20th August 2015 and taking on full statutory role as an executive NDPB on 1st October 2015
	Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park Authority	Established before 2012 and currently active
	National Galleries of Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
	National Library of Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
	National Museums of Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Police Investigations and Review Commissioner	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Quality Meat Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Risk Management Authority	Established before 2012 and currently active

	Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Scottish Agricultural Wages Board	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Scottish Children's Reporter Administration	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Scottish Enterprise	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Scottish Environment Protection Agency	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Scottish Funding Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Scottish Futures Trust	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Scottish Legal Aid Board	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Scottish Legal Complaints Commission	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Scottish Natural Heritage	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Scottish Qualifications Authority	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Scottish Social Services Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Skills Development Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Sportscotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
	VisitScotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Water Industry Commission for Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
Advisory non-departmental public body (NDPB)	Judicial Appointments Board for Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Local Government Boundary Commission for Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active

		Scottish Advisory Committee on Distinction Awards	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Scottish Law Commission	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Scottish Local Authorities Remuneration Committee	Committee stood down in February 2013
Tribunals		Additional Support Needs Tribunals for Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
		First-tier Tax Tribunal for Scotland	Tax Tribunals for Scotland formally launched April 2015
		Lands Tribunal for Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Parole Board for Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Private Rented Housing Panel / Homeowner Housing Panel	Organisation transferred over to be part of the Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service as of April 2015.
		Scottish Charity Appeals Panel	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Upper Tax Tribunal for Scotland	Tax Tribunals for Scotland formally launched April 2015
Public Corporations		Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd	Established before 2012 and currently active
		David MacBrayne Ltd	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Glasgow Prestwick Airport	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Highlands and Islands Airports Ltd	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Scottish Canals	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Scottish Water	Established before 2012 and currently active
Executive Agencies		Accountant in Bankruptcy	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Disclosure Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Education Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active

		Scottish Prison Service	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Scottish Public Pensions Agency	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Student Awards Agency for Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Transport Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
Non-Ministerial Department (NMD)		Food Standards Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS)	Established before 2012 and currently active
		National Records of Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Registers of Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Revenue Scotland	Established in 2015
		Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Scottish Housing Regulator	Established before 2012 and currently active
Commissioners and Ombudsmen		Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Scottish Human Rights Commission	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Scottish Information Commissioner	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Scottish Public Services Ombudsman	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Standards Commission for Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
Health Bodies		NHS Ayrshire & Arran	Established before 2012 and currently active
		NHS Borders	Established before 2012 and currently active

	NHS Dumfries & Galloway	Established before 2012 and currently active
	NHS Fife	Established before 2012 and currently active
	NHS Forth Valley	Established before 2012 and currently active
	NHS Grampian	Established before 2012 and currently active
	NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde	Established before 2012 and currently active
	NHS Highland	Established before 2012 and currently active
	NHS Lanarkshire	Established before 2012 and currently active
	NHS Lothian	Established before 2012 and currently active
	NHS Orkney	Established before 2012 and currently active
	NHS Shetland	Established before 2012 and currently active
	NHS Tayside	Established before 2012 and currently active
	NHS Western Isles (Eileanan Siar)	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Healthcare Improvement Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
	Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
	The Golden Jubilee Foundation (brand name for the National Waiting Times Centre Board)	Established before 2012 and currently active[36]
	NHS 24	Established before 2012 and currently active
	NHS Education for Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
	NHS Health Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active

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[36] The brand name was introduced in 2015.

		NHS National Services Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Scottish Ambulance Service Board	Established before 2012 and currently active
		State Hospital Board for Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
Other Significant National Body		Audit Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Court of Lord Lyon	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Drinking Water Quality Regulator	Established before 2012 and currently active
		HM Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
		HM Chief Inspector of Prisons in Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
		HM Chief Inspector of Prosecution in Scotland	Established before 2012 and currently active
		James Hutton Institute	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Justices of the Peace Advisory Committee	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Office of the Convener of the Schools Closure Review Panel	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Office of the Queens Printer	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Scottish Fire & Rescue Service	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Scottish Government	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Scottish Police Authority	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Scottish Road Works Commissioner	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Scottish Sentencing Council	Established in 2015
Local Authority		Aberdeen City Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
		Aberdeenshire Council	Established before 2012 and currently active

Angus Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
Argyll and Bute Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
City of Edinburgh Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
Clackmannanshire Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	Established before 2012 and currently active
Dumfries and Galloway Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
Dundee City Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
East Ayrshire Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
East Dunbartonshire Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
East Lothian Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
East Renfrewshire Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
Falkirk Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
Fife Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
Glasgow City Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
Highland Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
Inverclyde Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
Midlothian Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
Moray Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
North Ayrshire Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
North Lanarkshire Council	Established before 2012 and currently active

Orkney Islands Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
Perth and Kinross Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
Renfrewshire Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
Scottish Borders Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
Shetland Islands Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
South Ayrshire Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
South Lanarkshire Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
Stirling Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
West Dunbartonshire Council	Established before 2012 and currently active
West Lothian Council	Established before 2012 and currently active

Annex 5 Interview questions

This annex provides a list of the interview questions for public bodies that had produced a report and those that had not produced a report. Note that these questions were tailored for each interviewee according to their organisation and survey response.

Organisations that had published a biodiversity duty report

1. How did you become aware of the requirement to produce a biodiversity duty report?

2. Did you use the template when producing your report?
    i. Was it easy to follow and understand?
    ii. Do you think the template needs to be changed or altered?
    iii. Was the template restrictive?

3. Are there any barriers to reporting?

4. Are there any barriers to undertaking biodiversity actions?

5. Do you think that a guidance document would be beneficial to assisting reporting?
    i. If so, what would this look like? Should it be a structured (i.e. like a form to complete)? Should it contain worked examples?

6. Are there any additional actions (e.g. setting up an online forum, holding seminars, sending out reminders) that the Scottish Government could take to assist reporting?

7. Do you have any examples of good practice that you would like to highlight?

8. Any other comments?

Organisations that had not published a biodiversity duty report

1. Were you aware of the need for public bodies to report on biodiversity every three years?

2. Did you receive any form of communication from the Scottish Government?

3. Are you aware of the reporting template/guidance document?

4.   What do you think are the main barriers to reporting?

5.   How do you think the barriers can be overcome?

6.   Do you think that a guidance document and/or a template would be beneficial to assisting reporting?
>   i.   If so, what would this look like? Should it be a structured (i.e. like a form to complete)? Should it contain worked examples?

7.   Are there any additional actions that the Scottish Government could take to assist public bodies in reporting?

8.   Any other comments?

Annex 6 Relevance of the key steps in the "2020 Challenge for Scotland's biodiversity"

Outcomes from the "2020 Challenge for Scotland's biodiversity"	Key steps from the "2020 Challenge for Scotland's biodiversity"	Proportion of public bodies that could undertake activities relevant to this step
1) Healthy ecosystems: Scotland's ecosystems are restored to good ecological health so that they provide robust ecosystem services and build our natural capital	(1) Encourage and support ecosystem restoration and management, especially in catchments that have experienced the greatest degradation	Some
	(2) Use assessments of ecosystem health at a catchment level to determine what needs to be done	Some
	(3) Government and public bodies, including SNH, SEPA and FCS, will work together towards a shared agenda for action to restore ecosystem health at a catchment-scale across Scotland	Majority/All
	(4) Establish plans and decisions about land use based on an understanding of ecosystems. Take full account of land use impacts on the ecosystems services that underpin social, economic and environmental health	Majority/All
2) Natural capital - Natural resources contribute to stronger sustainable economic growth in Scotland, and we increase our natural capital to pass on to the next generation	(1) Encourage wide acceptance and use of the Natural Capital Asset Index (2012) including a comparable measure for the marine environment	Minority
	(2) Use this index to influence decision-making and market-based approaches, so that the wider monetary and non-monetary values for ecosystem services are recognised and accounted for	Minority
	(3) Undertake a major programme of peatland conservation, management and restoration	Minority
3) Biodiversity, health and quality of life - Improved health and quality of life for the people of Scotland, through investment in the	(1) Provide opportunities for everyone to experience and enjoy nature regularly, with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups	Majority/All
	(2) Support local authorities and communities to improve local environments and enhance biodiversity using green space and green networks, allowing nature to flourish and so enhancing the quality of life for people who live there	Majority/All

care of green space, nature and landscapes	(3) Build on good practice being developed by the National Health Service (NHS) and others to help encourage greenspace, green exercise and social prescribing initiatives that will improve health and wellbeing through connecting people with nature	Majority/All
	(4) Increase access to nature within and close to schools, and support teachers in developing the role of outdoor learning across the Curriculum for Excellence	Some
	(5) Encourage public organisations and businesses to review their responsibilities and action for biodiversity, and recognise that increasing their positive contribution to nature and landscapes can help meet their corporate priorities and performance	Majority/All
4) Wildlife, habitats and protected places - The special value and international importance of Scotland's nature and geodiversity is assured, wildlife is faring well, and we have a highly effective network of protected places	(1) Ensure that the management of protected places for nature also provides wider public benefits	Some
	(2) Align habitat restoration on protected areas with national goals for improving ecosystem health, with local priorities determined at the catchment or landscape scales	Minority
	(3) Integrate protected areas policy with action for wider habitats to combat fragmentation and restore key habitats	Some
	(4) Develop a wildlife management framework to address the key priorities for sustainable species management, conservation and conflict issues, including reintroductions and invasive non-native species	Minority
	(5) Involve many more people than at present in this work and improve our understanding of the poorly known elements of nature	Majority/All
5) Land and freshwater management - Nature is faring well, and ecosystems are resilient as a result of sustainable land and water management	(1) Promote an ecosystem approach to land management that fosters sustainable use of natural resources and puts biodiversity at the heart of land-use planning and decision-making	Some
	(2) Ensure that measures taken forward under the Common Agricultural Policy encourage land managers to develop and retain the diversity of wildlife habitats and landscape features	Some
	(3) Support 'High Nature Value' farming and forestry	Some
	(4) Put in place the management necessary to bring Scotland's protected areas into favourable condition and improve the ecological status of water bodies	Majority/All

	(5) Ensure that biodiversity and ecosystem objectives are fully integrated into flood risk management plans, and restore wetland habitats and woodlands to provide sustainable flood management	Some
	(6) Restore and extend natural habitats as a means of building reserves of carbon and to help mitigate climate change	Some
	(7) Provide clear advice to land and water managers on best practice	Some
6) Marine and coastal - Scotland's marine and coastal environments are clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse, meeting the long-term needs of people and nature	(1) Adopt a Scottish Marine Plan and develop regional marine plans to aid balanced decision-making in the marine environment.	Minority
	(2) Establish a coherent network of Marine Protected Areas, promoting sustainable use and conservation	Minority
	(3) Collate information on the location and sensitivity of priority marine features, and make this information available to support their protection	Minority
	(4) Achieve good environmental status for Scottish seas	Some
	(5) Bring Common Fisheries Policy fish stocks to levels consistent with Maximum Sustainable Yield wherever possible, and take account of biodiversity in managing inshore fisheries	Minority
	(6) Implement a rapid-response framework to prevent colonisation of new invasive species in Scotland's seas and islands	Minority
	(7) Improve the monitoring of the marine environment to identify changes and guide progress towards the above outcomes	Minority
	(8) Improve understanding of how coastal ecosystems are likely to adapt to climate change and develop appropriate strategies for coastal zone management	Minority

Key:
Minority = A small number of public bodies could directly contribute to this step
Some = A moderate proportion of public bodies could contribute to this step
Majority/All = Almost all public bodies (with exceptions) could contribute to this step in some way

Annex 7 Contribution of public body activities to relevant key steps from the biodiversity strategy

	Key step	Number of reports including activities that contribute to this step	Proportion of reports including activities that contribute to this step
(1-1) Encourage and support ecosystem restoration and management, especially in catchments that have experienced the greatest degradation		22	25-50%
(1-2) Use assessments of ecosystem health at a catchment level to determine what needs to be done		34	>50%
(1-3) Government and public bodies, including SNH, SEPA and FCS, will work together towards a shared agenda for action to restore ecosystem health at a catchment-scale across Scotland		39	>50%
(1-4) Establish plans and decisions about land use based on an understanding of ecosystems. Take full account of land use impacts on the ecosystems services that underpin social, economic and environmental health		44	>50%
(3-1) Provide opportunities for everyone to experience and enjoy nature regularly, with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups		32	>50%
(3-2) Support local authorities and communities to improve local environments and enhance biodiversity using green space and green networks, allowing nature to flourish and so enhancing the quality of life for people who live there		35	>50%
(3-3) Build on good practice being developed by the National Health Service (NHS) and others to help encourage greenspace, green exercise and social prescribing initiatives that will improve health and wellbeing through connecting people with nature		27	25-50%
(3-4) Increase access to nature within and close to schools, and support teachers in developing the role of outdoor learning across the Curriculum for Excellence		34	>50%
(3-5) Encourage public organisations and businesses to review their responsibilities and action		20	25-50%

for biodiversity, and recognise that increasing their positive contribution to nature and landscapes can help meet their corporate priorities and performance		
(4-1) Ensure that the management of protected places for nature also provides wider public benefits	11	<25%
(4-3) Integrate protected areas policy with action for wider habitats to combat fragmentation and restore key habitats	8	<25%
(4-5) Involve many more people than at present in this work and improve our understanding of the poorly known elements of nature	32	>50%
(5-1) Promote an ecosystem approach to land management that fosters sustainable use of natural resources and puts biodiversity at the heart of land-use planning and decision-making	26	25-50%
(5-2) Ensure that measures taken forward under the Common Agricultural Policy encourage land managers to develop and retain the diversity of wildlife habitats and landscape features	3	<25%
(5-3) Support 'High Nature Value' farming and forestry	18	25-50%
(5-4) Put in place the management necessary to bring Scotland's protected areas into favourable condition and improve the ecological status of water bodies	9	<25%
(5-5) Ensure that biodiversity and ecosystem objectives are fully integrated into flood risk management plans, and restore wetland habitats and woodlands to provide sustainable flood management	8	<25%
(5-6) Restore and extend natural habitats as a means of building reserves of carbon and to help mitigate climate change	9	<25%
(5-7) Provide clear advice to land and water managers on best practice	15	25-50%
(6-4) Achieve good environmental status for Scottish seas	6	<25%

Source: key steps from Scottish Government (2013): 2020 challenge for Scotland's biodiversity
Notes: Total number of reports reviewed: 56

Annex 8 Linking relevant key steps from the biodiversity strategy to the Six Big Steps for nature and the Aichi targets

Key step	Big steps for nature	Aichi targets
(1.1) Encourage and support ecosystem restoration and management, especially in catchments that have experienced the greatest degradation	Ecosystem Restoration Investment in Natural Capital Quality greenspace for health and educational benefits Conserving wildlife in Scotland Sustainable management of land and freshwater	Target 5: halve rate of loss of all natural habitats by 2020
(1.2) Use assessments of ecosystem health at a catchment level to determine what needs to be done	Sustainable management of land and freshwater	Target 8: decrease pollution levels by 2020 so they do not affect ecosystem function and biodiversity
(1.3) Government and public bodies, including SNH, SEPA and FCS, will work together towards a shared agenda for action to restore ecosystem health at a catchment-scale across Scotland	Ecosystem Restoration Conserving wildlife in Scotland Sustainable management of land and freshwater	Target 14: restore and safeguard ecosystems providing essential services (e.g. water) by 2020
(1.4) Establish plans and decisions about land use based on an understanding of ecosystems. Take full account of land use impacts on the ecosystems services that underpin social, economic and environmental health	Ecosystem Restoration Investment in Natural Capital Conserving wildlife in Scotland Sustainable management of land and freshwater	Target 19: knowledge, science base and technologies relating to biodiversity are improved, shared and applied by 2020
(3.1) Provide opportunities for everyone to experience and enjoy nature regularly, with a particular focus on disadvantaged groups	Quality greenspace for health and educational benefits Sustainable management of land and freshwater	Target 4: development/ implementation of plans for sustainable production and consumption

(3.2) Support local authorities and communities to improve local environments and enhance biodiversity using green space and green networks, allowing nature to flourish and so enhancing the quality of life for people who live there	Quality greenspace for health and educational benefits	Target 16: Nagoya Protocol to be in operation by 2015
(3.3) Build on good practice being developed by the National Health Service (NHS) and others to help encourage greenspace, green exercise and social prescribing initiatives that will improve health and wellbeing through connecting people with nature	Quality greenspace for health and educational benefits	None identified as specifically relevant to key step 3-3
(3.4) Increase access to nature within and close to schools, and support teachers in developing the role of outdoor learning across the Curriculum for Excellence	Quality greenspace for health and educational benefits	None identified as specifically relevant to key step 3-4
(3.5) Encourage public organisations and businesses to review their responsibilities and action for biodiversity, and recognise that increasing their positive contribution to nature and landscapes can help meet their corporate priorities and performance	Quality greenspace for health and educational benefits	None identified as specifically relevant to key step 3-5
(4.1) Ensure that the management of protected places for nature also provides wider public benefits	Ecosystem Restoration Quality greenspace for health and educational benefits Conserving wildlife in Scotland Sustainable management of land and freshwater	Target 11: conserve at least 17% of terrestrial and inland water and 10% of coastal and marine areas by 2020
(4.3) Integrate protected areas policy with action for wider habitats to combat fragmentation and restore key habitats	Ecosystem Restoration Conserving wildlife in Scotland Sustainable management of land and freshwater	Target 18: traditional knowledge and practices relevant to biodiversity conservation are respected and integrated into the implementation of the convention by 2020
(4.5) Involve many more people than at present in this work and improve our understanding of the poorly known elements of nature	Ecosystem Restoration Quality greenspace for health and educational benefits Conserving wildlife in Scotland	None identified as specifically relevant to key step 4-5

(5.1) Promote an ecosystem approach to land management that fosters sustainable use of natural resources and puts biodiversity at the heart of land-use planning and decision-making	Ecosystem Restoration Sustainable management of land and freshwater	Target 6: ensure sustainable management and harvesting of all fish, invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants by 2020
(5.2) Ensure that measures taken forward under the Common Agricultural Policy encourage land managers to develop and retain the diversity of wildlife habitats and landscape features	Sustainable management of land and freshwater	Target 7: ensure sustainable management of areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry by 2020
(5.3) Support 'High Nature Value' farming and forestry	Sustainable management of land and freshwater	Target 9: ensure identification and management of invasive alien species by 2020
(5.4) Put in place the management necessary to bring Scotland's protected areas into favourable condition and improve the ecological status of water bodies	Ecosystem Restoration Conserving wildlife in Scotland Sustainable management of land and freshwater	None identified as specifically relevant to key step 5-4
(5.5) Ensure that biodiversity and ecosystem objectives are fully integrated into flood risk management plans, and restore wetland habitats and woodlands to provide sustainable flood management	Ecosystem Restoration Sustainable management of land and freshwater	None identified as specifically relevant to key step 5-5
(5.6) Restore and extend natural habitats as a means of building reserves of carbon and to help mitigate climate change	Ecosystem Restoration Sustainable management of land and freshwater	None identified as specifically relevant to key step 5-6
(5.7) Provide clear advice to land and water managers on best practice	Ecosystem Restoration Conserving wildlife in Scotland Sustainable management of land and freshwater	None identified as specifically relevant to key step 5-7
(6.4) Achieve good environmental status for Scottish seas	Marine and Coastal ecosystems restored	None identified as specifically relevant to key step 6-4

Sources: Key steps from Scottish Government (2013): 2020 challenge for Scotland's biodiversity; Big steps for nature from Scottish Government (2015): Scotland's biodiversity: a route map to 2020; Aichi targets from the Convention on biological diversity, accessed at: https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/

How to access background or source data

The data collected for this social research publication:

☐ are available in more detail through Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics

☐ are available via an alternative route

☐ may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors.

☒ cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.

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