



**ALL-PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP  
on  
GAME & WILDLIFE CONSERVATION**

## Bottom-up ambition or top-down designation - who will deliver wildlife recovery?

**Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024, 4-5pm  
Room N, Portcullis House**

**Attendees:**

Name	Representing	Name	Representing
Sir Robert Goodwill	MP	<b>GWCT</b>	
Sir Bill Wiggin (part)	MP	Teresa Dent	GWCT
Philip Dunne (part)	MP	Henrietta Appleton	GWCT
		Sir Jim Paice	Chairman, GWCT
Lord Ashcombe	House of Lords		
Baroness Bakewell of Hardington Mandeville	House of Lords	<b>Defra</b>	
Lord Cameron of Dillington	House of Lords	Elliott Miller	Defra
		Danielle Rooke	Defra
Neeve McGinty	NFU		
Bethany Turner	CLA		
Charlotte Parkin	EFRA Committee Secretariat		
Sam Tasker	POST		
Laura Fatah	EAC Secretariat		

Apologies from: Sir Greg Knight MP, Lord Harlech, Lord Carrington, Lord Curry of Kirkharle, Baroness Hayman of Ullock, Lord Carter of Coles, the Earl of Caithness, Baroness Young of Old Scone, Earl of Shrewsbury.

**Notes from the meeting:**

After a brief introduction to the meeting by Sir Robert Goodwill MP, APPG chair, Elliott Miller the 30by30 on land lead at Defra presented an overview of the 30by30 on land in England policy paper and next steps. The [policy paper](#) outlines Defra’s initial approach to 30by30, an international commitment, and includes an indicative map of qualifying and potential 30by30 areas. To qualify towards the commitment to protect 30% of land for nature by 2030 an area will need to comply with three draft criteria: purpose (although biodiversity conservation need not be the primary purpose), protection (legal or other effective means) and management (to secure long term biodiversity outcomes).

Elliott introduced the concept of Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) as a way of providing recognition of an area’s contribution to 30by30 without legal designation. OECMs are defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity but currently none exist in England. Potential OECMs could include eNGO holdings, Government estates such as Ministry of Defence land and wider farmland that is delivering positive, long term biodiversity outcomes.

The draft criteria will be finalized over the coming months and guidance developed in conjunction with stakeholders. Defra is keen to incentivize landowners/managers to participate and ensure OECMs deliver based on a collaborative bottom-up approach. Stakeholder engagement will begin in February. His full presentation can be found on the APPG event page.

Teresa Dent, CEO of the GWCT, then presented on the Environmental Farmer Group (EFG) model. This is based on building an investable landscape by ensuring that farmers (with their advisors and GWCT) collectively help Government achieve its environmental targets whilst replacing income lost through changes to the Basic Payment Scheme through private and public sector funding. Farmer ambition should not be underestimated; so far over 500 farmers are members or have expressed an interest in joining an EFG. This amounts c. 2.6% of England's farmed area with areas in scope for the groups amounting to 17%. All members sign up to a vision, mission statement and three environmental outcomes (reversal of biodiversity loss, cleaner water and net C zero farming by 2040); for the uplands this includes peatland restoration, cleaner air and better representation.

The key to the EFG model is that they are farmer-owned and farmer-led. Each area or cell is a trading entity with formalized governance and an equalization mechanism. A pipeline of 26 trades worth £30m has been identified and as the market develops more opportunities to monetise environmental outcomes are expected to emerge.

Given that only 8% of England is currently managed for nature, such initiatives will be important in ensuring that the 72% of England managed by farmers and moorland managers are incentivized to contribute to 30by30. It is important that they are not nervous of the possibility of designation should they get involved.

Teresa's presentation can be found on the APPG event page.

## **Discussion**

The following are notes from the subsequent Q&A session chaired by Sir Robert.

1. Land use framework – whilst this is still awaited it will be important that this dovetails with the 30by30 initiative by providing, alongside Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS), a spatial context.
2. Local authority capacity – 30by30 will not be relying on local authority input but there will be recognition of the roles that Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and LNRS could play in its delivery.
3. LNRS – the 30by30 team is talking to their LNRS colleagues and Natural England as the work they are doing in identifying the area most favourable for nature could help ensure win-win scenarios for LNRS and 30by30.
4. OECMs – the international definition is seen as a starting point but it is expected that this will require appropriate interpretation for application in England. The scale at which this will apply e.g. conservation headland or farm is still being considered.
5. IUCN green listing – this could be used as a basis for OECM status. The EFG conservation plans are using the IUCN green listing standard to provide credibility.
6. Trusted partners – Defra is considering the use of “trusted partners” to deliver 30by30. These could be important in assessing what will qualify and in providing robustness to the process.
7. Farmer engagement – Defra was keen to emphasise that there would be no hard and fast rules for counting towards 30by30 such as requiring farmers to partner with eNGOs as bottom-up initiatives often ensured that the most appropriate outcome for that land was delivered in the long term.
8. Defining success – guidance will give lots of examples of the metrics and criteria that will ensure that 30by30 delivery is robust but the team is keen not to exclude areas that might deliver at one level but not to the detail of eNGOs for example. Monitoring will be required but this is likely to be a broader house than BNG.
9. EFGs – work on national targets is being pro-rated down for delivery at catchment level. The willingness of individual farms is then aggregated to see if government targets for a catchment can be achieved.

Sir Robert closed proceedings at 5pm by highlighting the opportunities for farmers to fill the BPS gap but at the same time expressing caution that Treasury might close the shortfall currently being seen.

**5<sup>th</sup> February 2024**