

# Biodiversity and Natural Capital for Decision Makers

12 May 2025

**IEMA** Transforming the world  
to sustainability

Soon to be known as The Institute of Sustainability and Environmental Professionals (ISEP)





# Housekeeping

- You're on mute
- Ask us questions using Questions function
- Slides will be shared with participants
- The presentation will be recorded and posted on the IEMA website
- Timekeeping

# Today's speakers



**Anthony Barron**

Environmental  
Sustainability Manager  
(MIEMA, CEnv, MSc,  
FRGS) at Skanska

**Valerie Robertson**

Senior Associate  
Director- Sustainable  
Economics and Finance.  
Greater Edinburgh Area

**Stephen Elderkin**

Director of  
Environmental  
Sustainability, National  
Highways

**Bill Eyres**

Sustainability  
Director, The Crown  
Estate

# Biodiversity and Natural Capital for Decision Makers: Realising the value

Valerie Robertson  
Senior Associate Director of Environmental Economics,  
Jacobs

IEMA webinar 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025

# Outline

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1. Introducing myself and Jacobs
2. Problems decision makers face in taking action on nature
3. Turning problems into opportunities
4. Tools and techniques we can use
5. Evidence and lessons learned

## Intro: my experience working with decision makers

- 17 years with Jacobs, now lead the Environmental Economics capability
- Look at the interactions between environment  $\longleftrightarrow$  economy
- Led the economic Case for the Manchester Clean Air Plan
- Benefits assessment for the City of Edinburgh Transformation strategy
- Economic Appraisal of various flood risk management schemes/strategies including incorporating wider benefits
- Piloting natural capital approaches for Transport Scotland
- Natural capital assessment and Environmental Net Gain (ENG) strategy for Anglian Water reservoirs
- Nature markets and 'benefits stacking' for habitat creation
- Helping clients with TCFD / TNFD disclosures



## Who Jacobs is

- **Our purpose:** to create a more connected, sustainable world.
- **One of Europe's largest** Environment and Sustainability consultancies with extensive sustainability reporting experience for major infrastructure.
- A lot of our work involves **providing decision makers with evidence** to invest in nature positive outcomes and **developing practical solutions** that deliver nature recovery, social value, and business benefits
- We've built **biodiversity and natural capital management tools** for utilities and transport clients across the UK.
- Pledged to **Get Nature Positive** in 2021 and we're on our own **TNFD** journey.
- Experienced in delivering **saltmarsh creation**, helping to develop the **UK Saltmarsh Code**, delivering **industry training** on BNG, and developing **Environmental Net Gain** thought leadership with IEMA.

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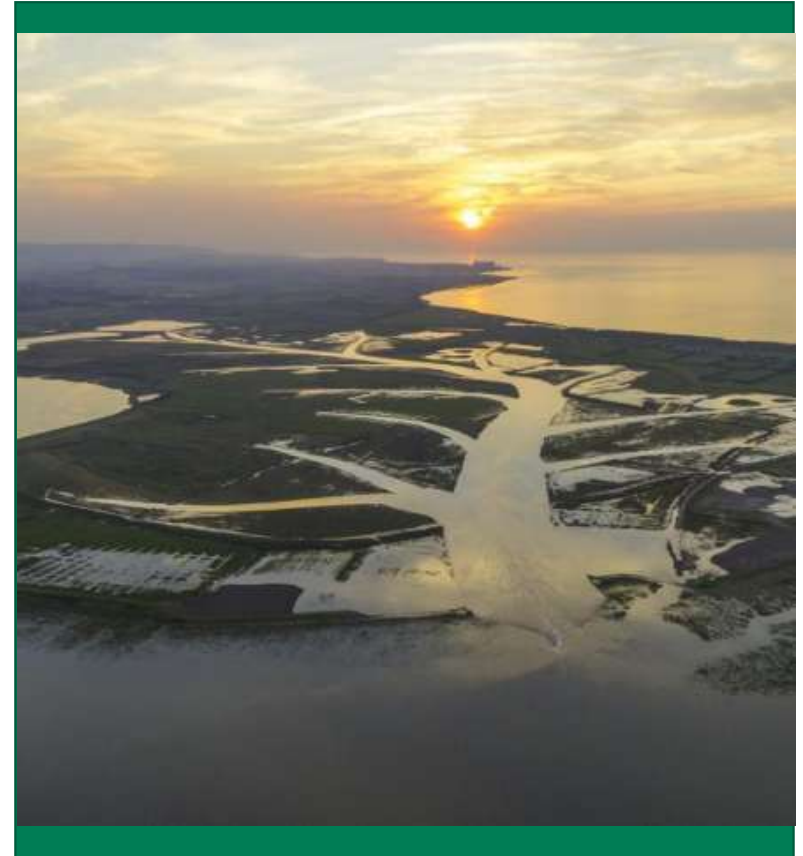
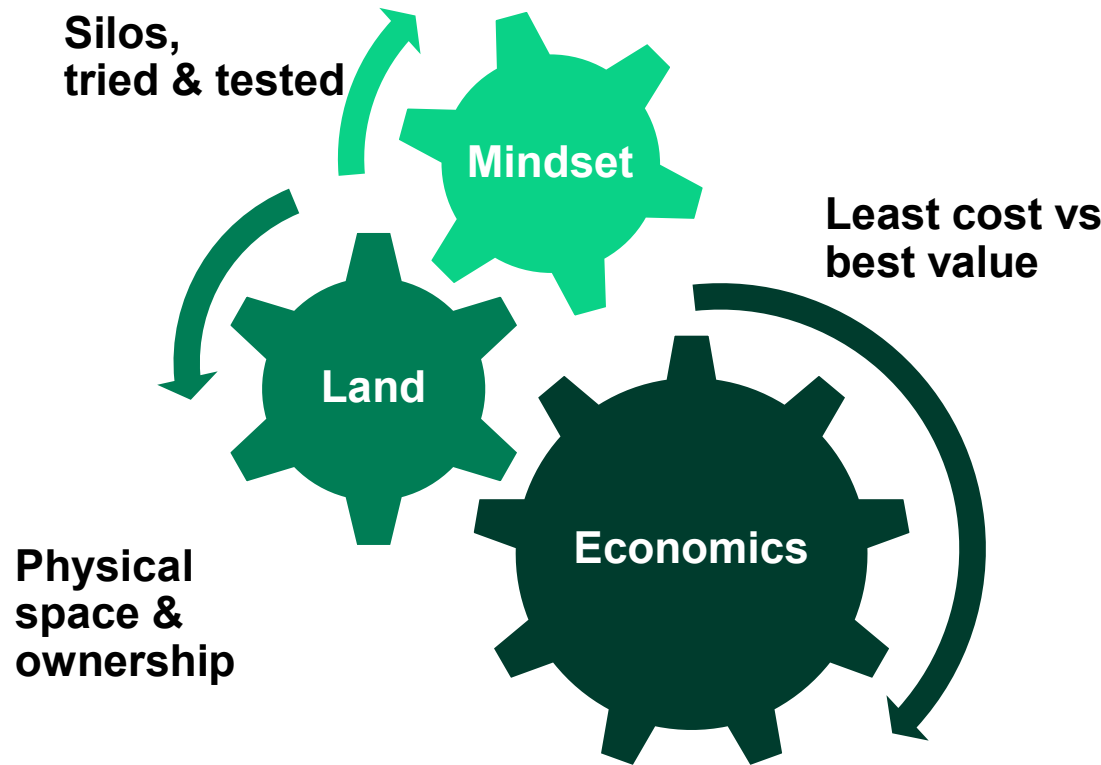


Photo credit: WWT Sacha Dench

# Problems: barriers decision makers face in taking action on nature crisis

- Nature degradation is a major threat to GDP
- Significant investment needed - £40bn net zero gap and £56bn nature positive gap
- Business impacts of nature loss – until very recently hard to see
- Least cost – arguing the case for going beyond compliance
- Perceived risks of Nature-based solutions, uncertain outcomes
- Identify, capture and articulate the benefits



# Turning problems into opportunities

Systems thinking creates multiple benefits



- Single intervention often delivers **multiple benefits**
- Address organisational, stakeholder, and societal **drivers**
- Opportunity to deliver more for less or **reduce costs** elsewhere
- Reduce risks, increase **resilience**

Nature is embedded in place



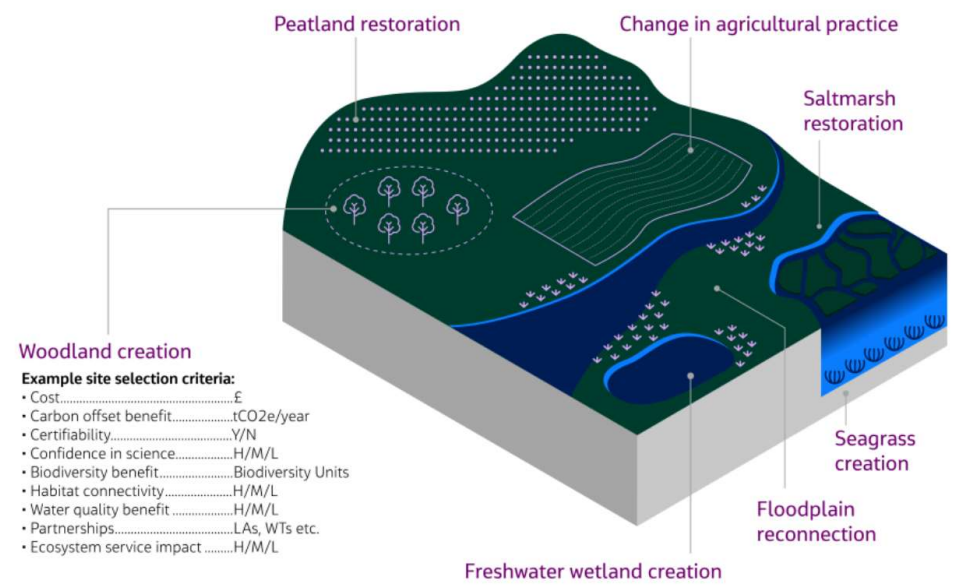
- Environmental processes, habitats, cultural interactions are **location dependent**
- Opportunities for **stakeholders** to co-develop solutions;
- for projects to be delivered in **partnerships**; and
- to attract **volunteers** for the long-term

New funding models and revenue streams

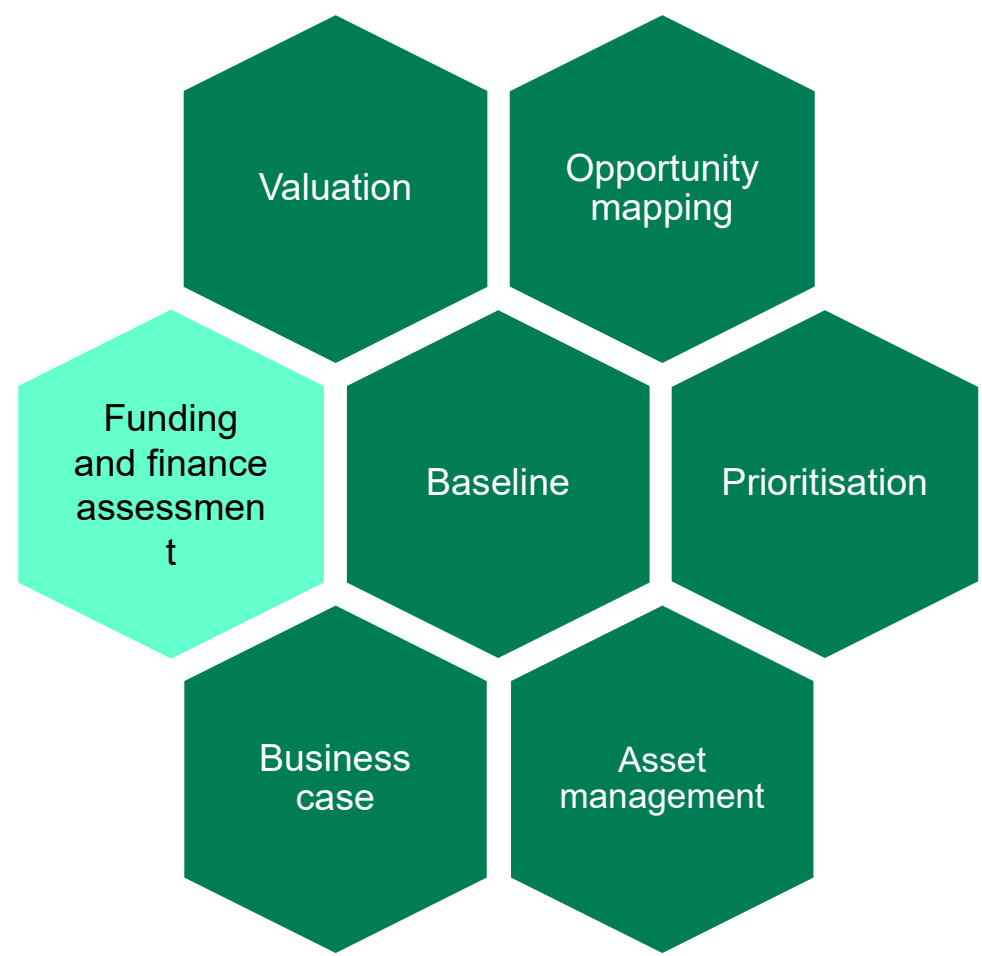


- Blending public funding and private finance
- Nature markets, outcome buyers
- Multiple scales from:
  - transactional (single actor)
  - to aggregated (single outcome)
  - to programmatic (multiple actors/outcomes)

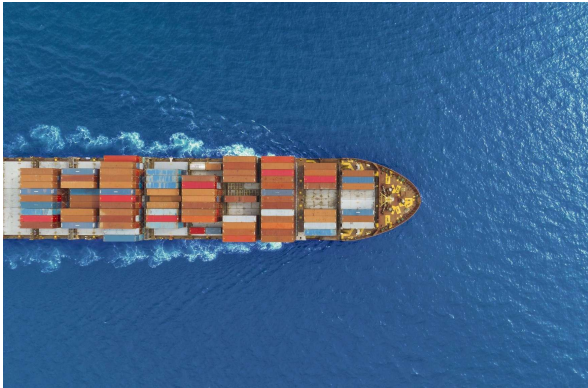
# Tools and techniques



Representation of the site selection model used by the Environment Agency to identify the most promising opportunities to deliver nature-based carbon reductions and removals in the North West.



## Evidence and lessons learned



### Example 1 – Industrial manufacturing client

- Surplus area currently a carpark, former landfill site
- Framed multiple divestment opportunities
- BNG proposed as an alternative to create open mosaic habitat
- Discussed future development requirements – portfolio approach
- Outcome favoured residential/commercial development but...
- Positive influence on the design to generate some BNG uplift

### Example 2 – Port Authority

- Dredging license requirement to consider alternative use of material
- Port Authority considering habitat creation through beneficial use
- Organisational drivers aligned to UN SDGs and social value
- Potential to generate revenue from saltmarsh carbon credits or BNG
- Carbon benefits to claim against Net Zero targets
- Opportunity to engage contractors and other authorities

## In summary...

### Know your decision makers and key decision points

- Identify the drivers and adapt communication techniques

### Multiple benefits brings more to the table

- Systems thinking to capture more benefits & beneficiaries

### Profitable and purposeful

- Reduce costs, reduce risk, increase resilience

### Right solution in the right location

- Partnership opportunities, new funding & finance models

### Celebrate the small wins

- Getting people to realise the value of nature

# Thank you!

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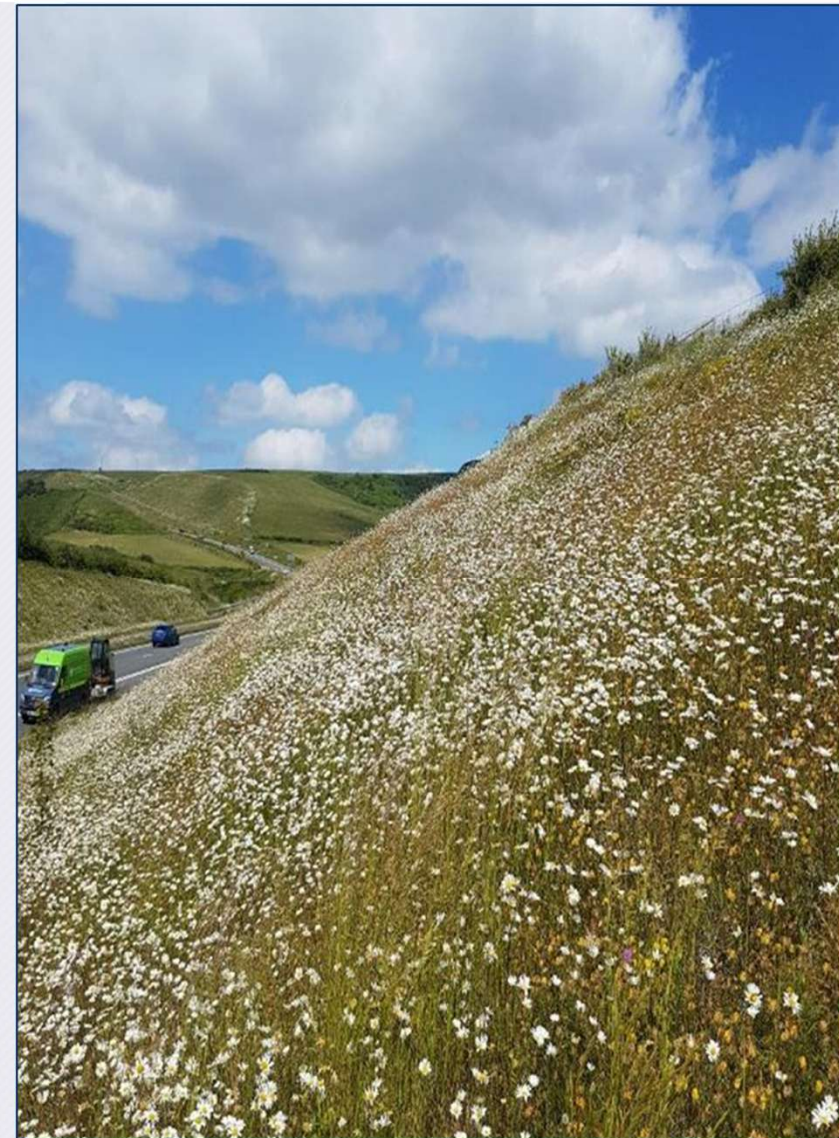
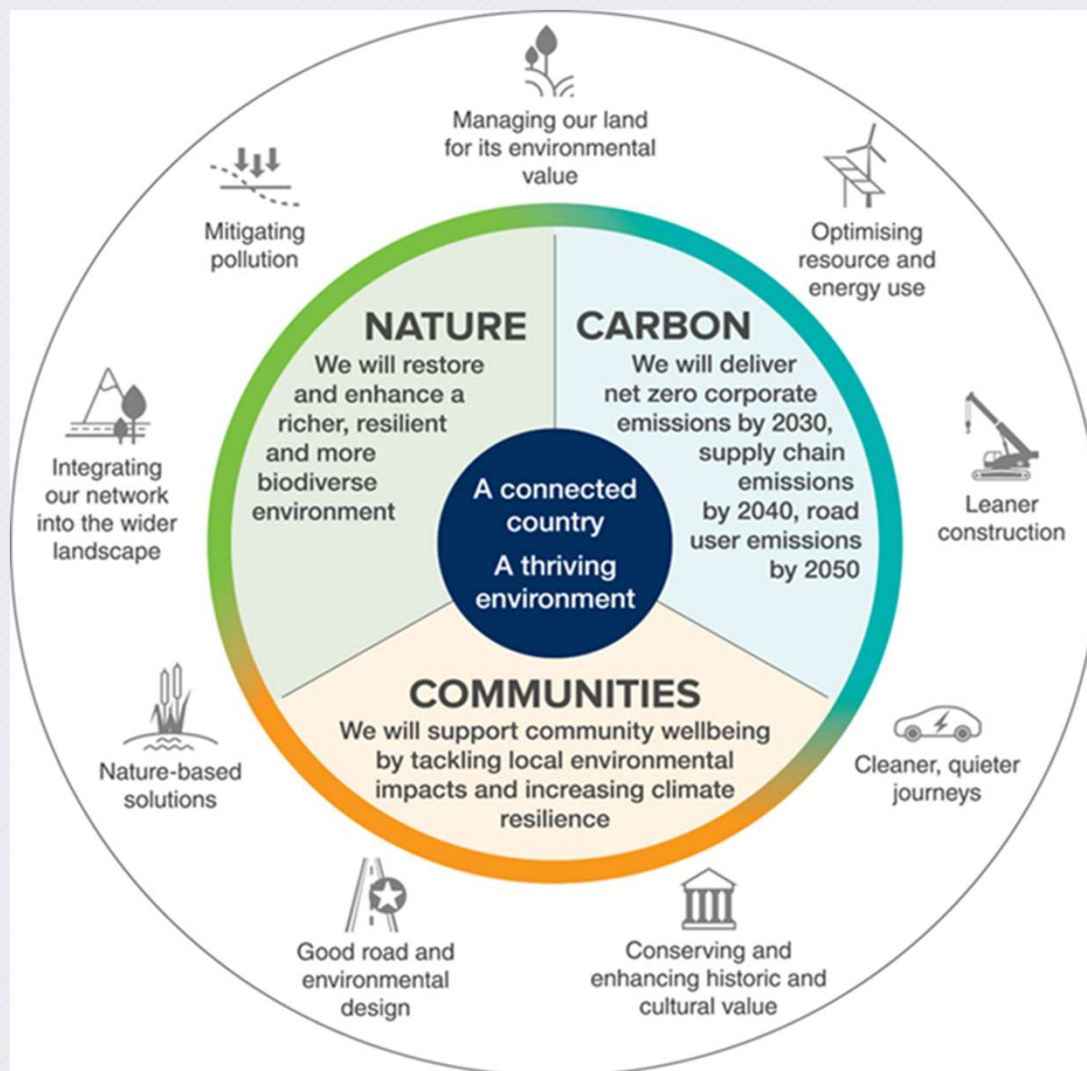
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# National Highways, Biodiversity and Decision Making





# Nature

- Our soft-estate is 30,000 hectares (equivalent to the Isle of Wight).
  - This is important habitat and can be managed for nature as well as safety.
  - The linear nature of our land holdings can provide connecting corridors for nature across the landscape.
  - We can re-connect habitat that has been fragmented by the construction of our network. We are constructing two exemplar green bridges and could contribute more to creating a Strategic Nature Network.
- A five-year funding cycle for National Highways is accompanied by a performance specification. A Key Performance Indicator for Road Period 2 (2020-2025) was to achieve no net loss of biodiversity.
- The Environment Act 2021 enhanced the legal duty to reach and maintain favorable condition for the over 100 Sites of Special Scientific Interest in our ownership and enhance (as well as conserve) biodiversity across all land holdings.

## In Road Period 2 we:

- Achieved no net loss of biodiversity delivering over 6500 biodiversity units, more than any other organisation in the country.
- Delivered improvements in design of our MP schemes to minimise biodiversity loss.
- Developed partnerships with environmental NGOs, with benefits for trust, confidence and joint delivery.
- Adopted an asset management approach to the soft estate.





[www.rebuildingnature.com](http://www.rebuildingnature.com)

Create a Strategic Nature Network  
Declare Nature Investment Zones  
Restart Natural Processes



Together we can rebuild nature. With all of us working towards the shared vision of a Strategic Nature Network we can make nature abundant, resilient and accessible, for the prosperity of all



# OUR PORTFOLIO

With our unique remit and diverse portfolio, The Crown Estate has a statutory mandate to create holistic and long-term financial, environmental and social value for our stakeholders, our customers and the nation.

This diverse portfolio, spanning a large variety of habitats, means that we have to work in partnership and provides us with the ability to bring together public and private partners, stakeholders and customers to catalyse change.



## Our portfolio includes:

**~50% of foreshore**  
in England, Wales & Northern Ireland.

Territorial seabed  
out to  
**12 nautical miles.**

**200,000 acres of rural land,**  
including grassland, wetland  
and peatland. This includes:

**~54,000 acres**  
of uplands and commons  
interests in Cumbria and Wales.

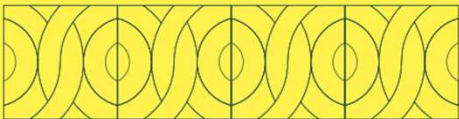
**The Windsor Estate's  
16,250 acres.**

Of which 80% is subject to environmental,  
ecological and land use designation.

**One of the largest  
custodians**  
of retail destinations in the UK.

Real Estate portfolio spanning  
**~10 million sq ft**  
in London's West End and  
**~8 million sq ft**  
of regional commercial development space.

# OUR AMBITION FOR NATURE RECOVERY



Interviews with over 30 experts in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.



A Workshop in January 2024 with 38 stakeholders to develop focus areas.



An interactive webinar in July 2024 to test our draft approach, commitments and goals.



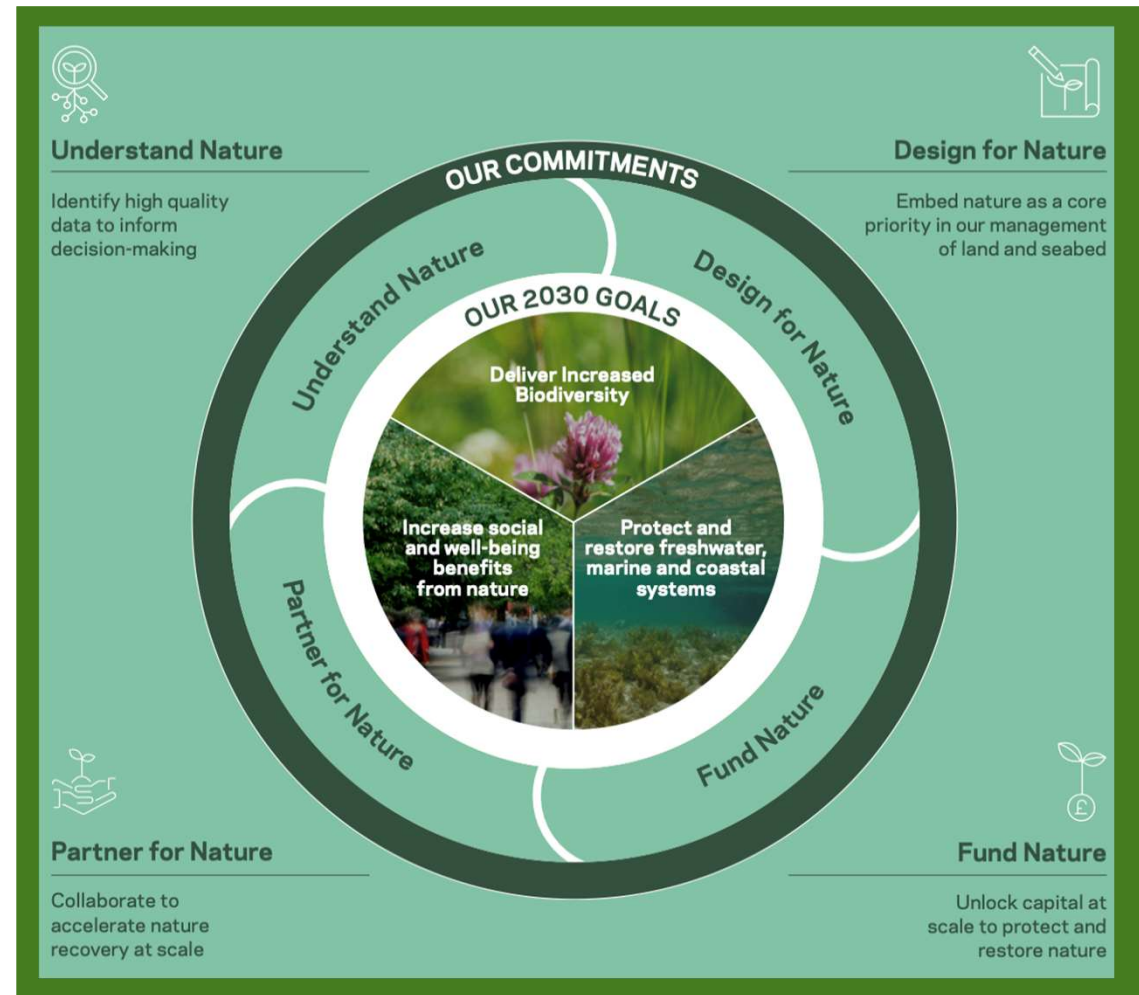
Input from environmental NGO's public bodies, SMEs, corporates, academics and trade unions.

# Our Nature Recovery Ambition

Nature is flourishing and cared for as one of the UK's most precious assets.

Joined-up action across land and at sea to restore nature and create lasting benefits for people, climate and the environment.

The Crown Estate's goals underpinning this vision and ambition align with domestic and global ambitions for nature's recovery, helping to halt nature's decline by 2030 and contributing to nature's recovery by 2050.



**“Urban biodiversity provides vital connectivity for wildlife ecosystems, whilst contributing to climate resilience and people’s health and wellbeing.”**

**Kristy Lansdown**  
**Head of Development**

# Biodiversity and Natural Capital for Decision Makers

Bill Eyres, Sustainability Director for Nature Recovery.

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## Our Approach

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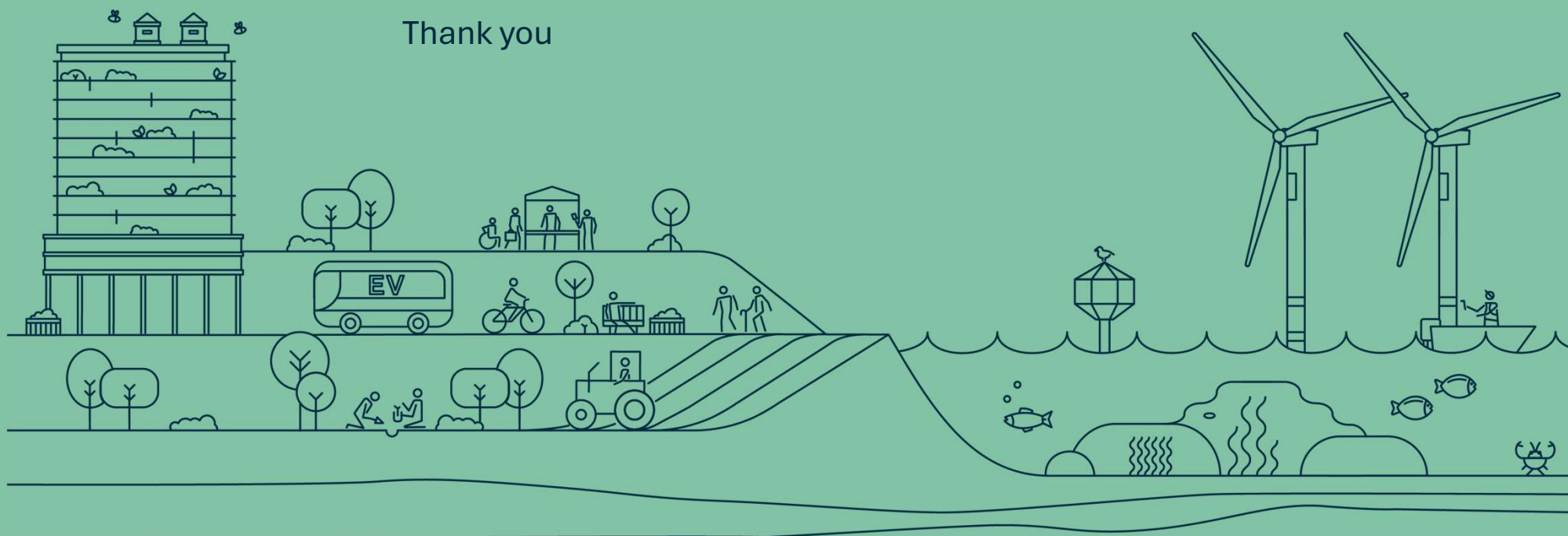


“Urban biodiversity provides vital connectivity for wildlife ecosystems, whilst contributing to climate resilience and people’s health and wellbeing.”

Kristy Lansdown  
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# Any questions?

Thank you



# Panel Discussion



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to sustainability

# Thank You for Attending

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