

IUCN protected area management categories

Statement of Compliance for

the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) reserves

Introduction to Statements of Compliance

Statements of Compliance are an innovation of the IUCN National Committee for the United Kingdom's *Putting Nature on the Map* project. The project has developed guidance on the use of the IUCN definition of a protected area and the assignment of the associated management categories and governance types¹. The guidance suggests that short but authoritative Statements of Compliance are produced for a conservation site or group of sites.

For groups of sites designated for conservation under one overriding piece of legislation or public policy the statements should concentrate on whether the sites meets the IUCN definition of a protected area. For statutory designations the Statements of Compliance should review all relevant legislation, focussing on the priority given to nature conservation in the long-term. For sites not covered by legislation the statements should review the significance for nature conservation of all relevant public policy positions that specifically affect the area.

In addition to reviewing legislation or policy in relation to the IUCN definition of a protected area, the Statement of Compliance can also assign sites to IUCN management category and governance type. In this case the statements should also provide an overview of current management objectives in particular in relation to prioritising nature conservation and summarize examples of current management practice that demonstrate the priority given to nature conservation and the ambition and vision for nature conservation in the future.

Note: Statements of Compliance should be prepared with full reference to the 2008 Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories (see footnote for details)

The Statement of Compliance below has been prepared for a group of sites some of which are defined in whole or in part, in legislation and those which are defined in whole or in part, in a non-statutory context.

¹ Dudley, N (Editor) (2008) Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. X + 86pp. <http://data.iucn.org/dbtw-wpd/edocs/PAPS-016.pdf>

AND

IUCN NCUK (2012); *Putting nature on the map - identifying protected areas in the UK: A handbook to help identify protected areas in the UK and assign the IUCN management categories and governance types to them*, IUCN National Committee for the United Kingdom, UK <http://www.iucn-uk.org/Portals/0/PNOTM%20Final%20January.pdf>

Background

The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust Limited is charity (1030884 England and Wales, SC039410 Scotland) and a company limited by guarantee (2882729 England) having its registered office at Slimbridge, GLOS, GL2 7BT.

Founded in 1946, the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) is a leading wetland conservation charity which works to protect wetland habitats in the UK and globally, and the services and value that wetlands give to wildlife and people. WWT manages nine Wetland Centres across the UK, which contain over 2,600 hectares of land managed as reserves, much of which is designated as being of national and international importance. WWT has over 200,000 members and more than one million people visit our Centres each year to learn about the practical benefits of wetlands as well as to experience the enjoyment of being among wetlands and their wildlife. The organisation provides formal learning about wetland wildlife and the water cycle to more than 60,000 school pupils each year.

WWT's mission is to save wetlands for wildlife and people and aims to achieve this through:

- *Inspiring people to connect with and value wetlands and their wildlife*
- *Demonstrating and promoting the importance and benefits of wetlands*
- *Countering threats to wetlands*
- *Creating and restoring wetlands and protecting key wetland sites*
- *Saving threatened wetland species*

Key documents:

Companies Acts 1985 and 1989 Memorandum of Association of The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (as last amended by a Special Resolution passed on 13th December 2007)

http://www.wwt.org.uk/uploads/documents/1344419783_WWTMemorandumofAssociationDec2007.pdf

Companies Act 1985 Articles of Association of The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (as amended by Special Resolutions of the Company dated 8 June 1995, 21 July 2001, 11 December 2008 and 21 October 2010)

http://www.wwt.org.uk/uploads/documents/1344419774_WWTArticlesofAssociationrevised211010.pdf

WWT Conservation Strategy 2008-2013 (internal document)

WWT Report and Financial Statements 2012/13

http://www.wwt.org.uk/uploads/reports/annual_report/2012/#1

WWT Conservation Report 2008-09

http://www.wwt.org.uk/uploads/documents/1319536897_WWTA4ConservationReportv7.pdf

WWT Conservation Report 2010-11

http://www.wwt.org.uk/uploads/documents/1374502266_WWTConservationReport2013Final.pdf

WWT's wildlife reserves and the IUCN definition of a protected area

The table uses the main key in the Putting Nature on the Map Handbook for identifying if a site meets the IUCN definition of a protected area².

Main elements of IUCN definition	Discussion of element in relation to WWT wildlife reserves
Are the sites in clearly defined geographical areas?	Yes. Each of the nine WWT reserves have boundaries clearly marked on maps, typically following natural boundaries on the ground (e.g. field boundaries) these boundaries have been digitised across all sites however these digital boundaries have not been fully ground truthed/verified. However, as many of the sites are coastal, the actual land boundaries can change over time via coastal processes. Therefore, to avoid any potential conflict or confusion, point data has been provided for this submission. In addition, all nine reserves are, in whole or in part, designated as SSSIs or SNCIs (as well as other designations) with corresponding legally notified boundaries.
Are they recognised, dedicated and managed to achieve the long-term conservation of nature? NB 'nature' includes all levels of biodiversity as well as geodiversity, landforms and broader natural values.	<p>Yes. The WWT Memorandum of Association states "The objects of the Trust are to promote the conservation and study of wildfowl and wetlands forming their habitat...and to maintain an establishment at Slimbridge and such other branch establishments as the Council may think fit....for the conservation of wildfowl and wetlands...".</p> <p>Eight of WWT's reserves are designated, in whole or in part, under UK and/or EU legislation. The reserve at WWT Washington is not designated nationally or internationally but is recognised locally as a wildlife site (Site of Nature Conservation Importance – SNCI). The designations for WWT sites are based mainly on their wildlife value although some sites are covered by broader designations and are parts of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Natural Scenic Areas.</p> <p>With respect to reserve management, key designations exist because aspects of the habitat or species the site supports have been identified as important. However as reserves and our knowledge of them develops it has become clear that they are important for a broader spectrum of wildlife. We are currently in the process of developing updated management plans which will reflect all the significant wildlife features on our reserves whilst continuing to conserve the aspects for which the sites were historically designated.</p>
Is the main management objective nature conservation? Other objectives of equal standing may be present but they do not cause conflict, i.e. nature conservation is the priority	Yes. The areas within WWT sites delineated as 'reserve' refers to those areas of the site where the primary function and guiding principles are associated to biological (species and habitat) management and conservation. This includes land which is both formally designated and undesignated.

² See page 26 of the *Putting Nature on the Map Handbook*

Main elements of IUCN definition	Discussion of element in relation to WWT wildlife reserves
Does the designation of the site prevent, or eliminate where necessary, any exploitation or management practice that will be harmful to the objectives of designation?	Yes. All WWT reserves have statutory designations, some multiple, including SSSI (8), SNCI (1), SPA (6), SAC (4) Ramsar (6), NNR (2), MNR (1), AONB/NSA (3) and National Park (1). The designating authorities have various statutory and other means to prevent or eliminate practices that would obstruct achievement of a site's nature conservation objective(s). For example any management operation required out with the management plan (which are submitted to the relevant statutory agency for endorsement), has to be consented by the relevant agency. Similarly some management activities, such as those near water, require an operating licence to be issued by the relevant agency. Those areas of WWT reserves without statutory designations over them are still covered by WWT's own management plans and principles, which for reserve areas are first and foremost about biological conservation and management.
Does the designation of the site aim to maintain, or ideally, increase the degree of naturalness of the ecosystem being protected?	In a UK context, the landscapes that reserves (and particularly wetland reserves) sit within are typically heavily modified and managed, so the degree to which 'naturalness' can be achieved is limited. However we consider that WWT reserves address this element in a UK context as the management approach and management plans for WWT reserves aim to maintain and where possible enhance the significant wildlife features that the reserve has been identified as being important for. For those areas of the reserves that are legally designated, WWT and/or the designating authorities monitor and report the condition and take action to bring features in to favourable condition where possible.
Is the long-term nature conservation ensured through legal or other effective means? E.g. national or international statutory law/ agreement/convention, traditional rules or NGO policy.	Yes, WWT's long term vision is that society values, protects and manages wetlands to sustain wildlife, people and the Planet. The organisations policies and approaches with respect to reserves management are guided by this vision. We are in the process of ensuring that each reserve has an up-to-date Management Plan that describes the conservation, wildlife value and history of a site. Reserve Management Plans are extensively updated on a 5 year cycle and reviewed annually. Most reserves are also in long-term environmental stewardship agreements such as Higher Level Stewardship. For the reserves or parts of reserves that are designated, their long-term conservation is established in law (e.g. The EU Birds and Habitats Directives, the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended); the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)). These pieces of legislation are periodically reviewed and updated to address emerging issues.

IUCN Management categories:

Category Ia 0

Category Ib 0

Category II 0

Category III 0

Category IV All nine WWT reserves

Category V 0

IUCN Governance types:

Private Governance is those reserves which are owned or managed by WWT and where only Trust staff and members directly undertake the implementation of the management plan

Private Governance:

WWT Washington Reserve

Shared Governance are those reserves where the management is by a committee/steering group predominantly of non-Trust members or Trust staff OR where the reserve is managed in partnership with the landowner OR in agreement with statutory bodies (e.g. NE, SNH).

Shared Governance:

WWT Caerlaverock Reserve

WWT Arundel Reserve

WWT Castle Espie Reserve

WWT Llanelli Reserve

WWT London Reserve

WWT Martin Mere Reserve

WWT Slimbridge Reserve

WWT Welney Reserve

Governance by local community:

None