



WWT's manifesto asks

# UNLOCK THE POWER OF WETLANDS

For climate, nature and wellbeing



# THE TIME FOR WETLANDS IS NOW

Communities and businesses are being increasingly impacted by the climate, nature and wellbeing crises.

In a world of problems, wetlands offer that rare thing – a cost effective solution, and WWT is leading the way.

Wetlands are carbon sinking, water purifying, flood busting, nature reviving, mood lifting ecosystems. They're also critical for a thriving economy.



## WE NEED WETLANDS NOW MORE THAN EVER. BUT WE'RE LOSING THE BENEFITS THEY PROVIDE. THIS NEEDS TO STOP.

# 75%

of inland wetlands have  
been lost in the last 300  
years in the UK

## WETLANDS CAN...

### Tackle the climate crisis.

Saltmarshes store carbon 40 times faster than forests. Wetlands also build flood resilience by providing Natural Flood Management.

### Support people's health and wellbeing.

Wetlands provide blue spaces that support social prescribing. They offer relief in crowded towns and cities and support healthy communities.

### Help nature burst back to life.

Wetlands cover just 3% of the UK but support 10% of its species. They can also help clean our water, which is good for us and good for nature.

### Create prosperity and build resilient economies.

Wetlands offer new opportunities for employment, income and investment. They also contain vital stocks of natural capital and provide invaluable ecosystem services.

## We are calling on decision makers to support policies that restore and protect wetlands.

We need to move beyond the nature versus economy narrative. After all, a world where healthy wetland nature thrives, is a world where economies prosper, people thrive and wildlife is revived.

To respond to the challenges of unsustainable development, pollution and climate, we need to rapidly restore the UK's wetlands and better protect those that remain.

### Political parties have a chance to make this happen. Here's how:

- Adopt policies to drive the restoration of 100,000 hectares of wetlands in the UK.
- Produce a UK Wetlands Strategy to protect, manage and restore the UK's wetlands.



# RESTORE THE UK'S WETLANDS

## Adopt policies that drive the restoration of 100,000 hectares of wetlands.

This requires partnerships at scale across government, business and wider society. We need to combine project delivery with capacity building and community engagement. **To deliver 100 000 ha of created and restored wetlands, as recommended by the Natural Capital Committee, WWT is calling for all political parties to commit to the following policies:**



### Store carbon

Include coastal wetlands into the UK's carbon accounting and climate action plans.



### Reduce flooding

Create an accreditation scheme to drive the use of Natural Flood Management techniques.



### Boost wellbeing

Set compulsory standards for the use of wetlands in local plans and major developments.



### Restore water quality

Establish a pilot scheme to boost the use of treatment wetlands by 2025.



Inland wetland restoration can provide up to **£9** of benefit per £1 spent

**10** minutes in a wetland can boost positive feelings

Read our [route maps](#) for more detail on restoring wetlands

# PROTECT THE UK'S WETLANDS

## Produce a UK Wetlands Strategy to protect, manage and restore the UK's wetlands.

The UK's existing wetlands are insufficiently protected and often poorly managed. Efforts to restore them are ad-hoc and inadequate. Governance systems are lacking and public engagement is low. The Convention on Wetlands recommends signatories produce a National Wetland Strategy, but the UK has yet to produce one.

## WWT is calling on all political parties to work with us to develop a National Wetland Strategy that can:



### Protect our wetlands

To ensure wetlands are effectively protected, we need strong legal protection, an expanded network of habitats, improvement of site condition and effective enforcement.



### Manage our wetlands

To ensure our wetlands are well managed, we need management plans, extensive information gathering, a skilled workforce and empowered local communities.



### Restore our wetlands

To support a growing network of restored wetlands, we need restoration targets, research and development, climate adaptation plans and private financing.

Saltmarshes bury carbon **40x faster** than forests



Read our [UK Wetlands Strategy proposal](#)



# WE ARE WWT



WWT is the wetland restoration charity. We're on a mission to restore wetlands because they're a wondrous solution to the problems our world faces.

## OUR VISION:

A world where healthy wetland nature thrives and enriches lives.

## OUR MISSION:

Restore wetlands and unlock their power.

## OUR AMBITIONS:

We have big ambitions for the future. To stay on track to reach our ambitions, our new **strategy** sets clear targets for 2030.

To find out more please contact our Head of Policy & Advocacy [tom.fewins@wwt.org.uk](mailto:tom.fewins@wwt.org.uk)

