

MOTION TO EAST LoTHIAN COUNCIL
31 October 2023

Declaration of Nature Emergency

Council:

- (1) Notes the body of evidence which outlines the alarming extent of the global nature and biodiversity crisis. Nature is in decline and urgent action must be taken to reverse this.
- (2) Recognises the inherent value of nature, as well as its crucial importance as an integral part of culture and society, and for our health, wellbeing, and economy; this being demonstrated through placemaking, tourism, food, energy, water and air quality regulation, etc.
- (3) Additionally, recognises that the nature and climate emergencies are intrinsically linked and that nature plays a key role in meeting climate targets, particularly for climate change adaptation and resilience.

Further, Council:

- (4) Welcomes the revised national Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and forthcoming statutory targets for public bodies, including local authorities, required to meet the challenges of the nature crisis.
- (5) Welcomes the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) agreed at COP15 in December 2022 and celebrates the role played by the Edinburgh Process as part of this.
- (6) Recognises the key role subnational governments and local communities will play in realising delivery of the GBF and notes the long and strong history of work on biodiversity in East Lothian, including a range of strategies, partnerships and projects that are currently delivering action related to the nature emergency.

Therefore, Council agrees:

To declare a Nature Emergency, akin to the Council declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019, recognising the state of nature, its inherent value, and the crucial role its recovery and restoration will play in realising climate targets.

The Council requests a report to be presented to Council in 2 committee cycles, which

- (1) Outlines how existing Council strategies, such as the Biodiversity Action Plan, Climate Strategy, Tree and Woodland Strategy, Green Network Strategy, Open

Space Strategy, Local Development Plan, align with the GBF, Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and the Berlin Urban Nature Pact, and notes any changes to existing strategies required to deliver against these.

- (2) Provides an update on the development of our Biodiversity Action Plan including specific considerations of how the plan is impacting:
 - (a) The adoption of an ecological coherence approach to effectively identify and target actions required to tackle the nature emergency and deliver the various strategies listed above, including through the further development of the regions Nature Network.
 - (b) The adoption of a partnership approach, working with East Lothian's community Biodiversity and Sustainability Groups, and all National Agencies like Nature Scotland to maximise opportunities for delivery of the strategies listed above and taking learning from our Cross-Party Climate Change & Sustainability Forum that is part of our 2045 Climate Change Strategy Work.

Proposed by (name): Councillor Norman Hampshire
Date: 28 August 2023

Seconded by (name): Councillor Colin McGinn
Date: 28 August 2023

Received by (name of officer): Lel Gillingwater, Team Manager, Democratic and Licensing
Date: 28 August 2023