

## **THE BIODIVERSITY DUTY REPORTING TEMPLATE: LEVEL THREE ORGANISATIONS**

**Public bodies that do not engage directly or indirectly with communities, young people or the public and do not own or manage land, regulate land use, or have responsibilities linked to biodiversity**

### **Report Outline**

Bodies are encouraged to use the following structure for their report. This is set out in the template below, which you can either type directly into, or copy into a separate document.

- Section 1: Introductory information about your public body
- Section 2: Actions to protect biodiversity and connect people with nature
- Section 3: Mainstreaming biodiversity
- Section 4: Nature-based solutions, climate change and biodiversity
- Section 5: Workforce development
- Section 6: Research and monitoring
- Section 7: Biodiversity highlights and challenges

### **The Completion Notes**

These completion notes offer guidance to support your public body to complete your Biodiversity Duty Report. Taken together with the associated hyperlinks, they provide suggestions on the breadth of actions that could be included in your report. They may also assist with forward planning on how biodiversity can be taken into account in future.

While they incorporate the key elements on which you may wish to report, they are not an exhaustive list and it is possible that there will be a range of additional work that your organisation carried out in support of biodiversity on which you may also wish to report. To find out more on the Biodiversity Duty see the [NatureScot website](#).



## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR PUBLIC BODY

Please describe your organisation’s role and purpose, including any particular environmental responsibilities

<p><b>Guidance on completing this section</b></p>	<p>Summarise your organisation’s role and purpose, including a brief outline of governance and management structures.</p> <p>Summarise any relevance and impacts of biodiversity to your organisation. This might include the key environmental impacts from your operations, and any your role you have in sustainable development.</p>
<p><b>Text Field</b></p>	<p><u><a href="#">SFC’s role in the just transition to net zero</a></u></p> <p>The Scottish Funding Council is the Scottish Government's public body responsible for funding colleges and universities in Scotland, supporting teaching, research and innovation. The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) is a Non-Departmental Public Body of the Scottish Government and operates at 'arms-length' from the Government. SFC was established by the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Act 2005.</p> <p>SFC is governed by a publicly appointed Board, which delegates the management of the organisation to the Chief Executive. SFC has around 130 staff and budget of around £2bn in financial year 2023-2024. Our own operations are centred on our office in Haymarket Terrace in Edinburgh. Our role in supporting Scotland’s universities and colleges nationally means that we fund, influence or otherwise are involved in the activities of universities and colleges or regional college groupings.</p> <p>Our role in sustainable development under our 2005 foundational Act includes supporting research capacity (to enable project investment by other funders), investing in university and college estates, learning and teaching, student interests and upskilling. In all of these activities we are mindful of our legal obligation to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change in line with Scotland’s national climate change targets and plans, including Scotland’s Climate Change Plan and Climate Change Adaptation Plan. Our underpinning support for the Scottish tertiary education and research sector’s net zero transition is key to delivering the Scottish Government’s national green economic and societal objectives under the NSET, the NPF, the CESAP, Just Transition Plans, the Innovation Strategy, green infrastructure plans and all sectors.</p> <p>In November 2022 we published a net zero routemap <a href="#">SFC’s Net Zero &amp; Sustainability Framework for Action</a>. (Our updated Carbon Management Plan can be found at the same link.) Our Net Zero Framework includes both SFC’s operational emissions and activities, and actions we will take towards 2026 and beyond to embed net zero and environmental responsibility through our policy and funding levers with the tertiary education and</p>



research sector in Scotland. The Framework sets out how SFC will support Scotland's colleges and universities as global leaders in accelerating the climate emergency response and Scotland's just transition. This should lead to reduced emissions, system change, and long-term climate resilience.

#### SFC's Governance and management of our climate response

SFC's Governance and management arrangements for our climate emergency response are summarised from our latest carbon report submitted to the Scottish Government in November 2023 as follows:

- SFC's climate emergency, net zero and environmental sustainability response is ultimately governed by its Board in terms of scrutiny, oversight and challenge.
- Committees of the Board contribute to and comment on specific aspects of SFC's net zero and sustainability response relating to their particular roles.
- Operational control within SFC on climate matters is delegated to the Chief Executive who leads the Executive Team. The Executive Team is supported by the Senior Management Team. The lead Director for net zero strategy and implementation is the SFC's Director of Finance working with all Directors and Directorates.
- SFC's Net Zero & Sustainability Framework for Action is supported by an internal delivery plan and further work has taken place in 2023 clarifying delivery roles of SFC teams under the Framework.
- Delivery across SFC under the Net Zero Framework is supported by officers in the net zero hub within the Finance & Funding Directorate, and by a cross-cutting management group - the Net Zero and Sustainability Delivery Group (NZDG) - critical to managing a coordinated, orderly and just transition.
- Day to day decision making on net zero content in policies and funding is owned by the relevant local policy or funding lead, with net zero best practice support available from the central net zero hub.

Looking ahead, key priorities for SFC on raising its response to the climate and nature emergency include:

- Embedding net zero/sustainability principles through our funding and policy levers - a multiyear project requiring strategic internal leadership/coordination, with best practice support from the net zero hub.
- Developing new Impact and Accountability approaches with the sector including net zero/sustainability.



- Developing a more detailed long term carbon reduction plan to bring SFC's operational emissions down to net zero by 2040-2045. This links to SFC's business continuity, resilience, and adaptation planning.

#### Overview of the response by Scotland's tertiary education and research sector

As indicated SFC provides core public funding to Scottish tertiary institutions in Scotland. Institutions also attract key funding from other sources.

Scottish universities and colleges set their own institutional net zero targets and any interim sustainability targets locally, reflecting relevant national climate and biodiversity legislation, targets and carbon compliance requirements. Universities are leading in many areas of the climate and nature response with a huge number of online resources available [updating](#) and [benchmarking](#) their net zero transition progress against voluntary sector standards and national legal duties. Several Scottish Universities are signed up to the Race to Net Zero initiative, the SDG accord, and other recognised net zero and sustainability progress frameworks. In Scotland, colleges are also signed up to the [Scottish Colleges Statement of Commitment on the Climate Emergency](#). Institutions are working on key agendas including upskilling and reskilling in the just transition, place-based transformation and policy influencing, engaging in a wide range of climate mitigation and adaptation partnership working initiatives with the Scottish and UK Governments, global partners, business, local authorities, communities and others.

Scottish tertiary education and research bodies fundable by the SFC are subject to the usual statutory duties on adaptation and biodiversity. They make best efforts to complete adaptation profiles under statutory carbon reporting to the SSN and SG annually under the PSLGCE guidance. Page 44 of the [SSN public sector analysis report](#) includes an assessment of FHE's submissions as a whole. It may also be interesting, in the nature and biodiversity context, to note several reports in recent years on the Scottish tertiary education sector's contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals:

- [SDG reporting in Scotland's Universities and Colleges](#)
- [Scottish research supporting SDGs](#)
- [SDG case studies](#)

Further research & innovation highlights are provided here but are not comprehensive e.g. the [Sustainable Aquaculture Innovation Centre](#), [SRUC's work](#) on food security, natural capital, methane reduction in livestock, or vertical farming. The [GALLANT project](#) sponsored by NERC takes a whole-systems approach including nature and community adaptation (including health). [The Cool Farm Tool](#) empowers farmers to reduce GHGs



in 150 countries. SFC has also recently published reports demonstrating the value of Scottish university R&I, including net zero: [RAND study](#) (see pages 68-80, and 83-90), and a [REG case studies report](#). More sector net zero case studies are available within the annex of the SFC's Net Zero Framework and the main body of the report.



## SECTION 2: ACTIONS TO PROTECT AND ENHANCE BIODIVERSITY

Please describe and explain any actions that your organisation has undertaken alone or as part of a partnership to benefit biodiversity directly, to tackle the main drivers of biodiversity loss, or to achieve wider outcomes for nature and people

<p><b>Guidance on completing this section</b></p>	<p>You may wish to include any activities across the breadth of your organisation, including any actions that you have undertaken on your premises.</p> <p>Please explain how these actions have benefited biodiversity or sustainability, noting successes and challenges, and any plans for future or follow-up work. These might include:</p> <p>Addressing or raising awareness of some of the key drivers of biodiversity loss, which might include work or projects to tackle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate Change;</li> <li>• Land use change;</li> <li>• Pollution.</li> </ul> <p>Enhancing biodiversity at your premises through actions in and around offices, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing bird boxes / feeders;</li> <li>• creating habitat for wildlife, such as wildflower areas;</li> <li>• installing green roofs;</li> <li>• organising staff volunteering days;</li> <li>• sponsoring a species or habitat, or raising funds for a local wildlife trust or charity;</li> <li>• reducing energy use;</li> <li>• recycling and re-using as much as you can so that you produce less waste;</li> <li>• encouraging staff to cycle or walk to work more.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Links to related resources</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidance on the <a href="#">Key pressures on biodiversity</a>.</li> <li>• Guidance on <a href="#">Buildings and biodiversity</a> - how to make space for nature in the built environment.</li> <li>• Information on <a href="#">placemaking, open space and green infrastructure</a>.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of smaller actions that can be enacted in the office or staff homes - <a href="#">Biodiversity - what can you do?</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Text Field</b></p>	<p><b>SFC's operations:</b></p> <p><b>Carbon reduction</b> - Before the pandemic in financial year 2019-2020, in the last year of full office working, SFC's total emissions were estimated at 77 tCO<sub>2</sub>e. In the calendar years 2020 and 2021 emissions dropped as our offices were not widely used. On the best available data, our carbon report submitted in 2023 to the Scottish Government shows that in the reporting period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, our total emissions equalled 81.7tCO<sub>2</sub>e. (Business travel has increased since the pandemic. Our office space is open five days a week with around a 75% uptake of home working in the latest reporting year. SFC leases its office space, and has no fleet vehicles, nor satellite offices.)</p> <p><b>Carbon and environmental literacy</b> - There have been no specific initiatives to reduce SFC's operational emissions in recent years. However, there was a 70% uptake of climate literacy training by all staff in FY 2022-2023, with plans to perform this again each year from FY 2024-2025 on a rolling basis. Staff regularly share volunteering opportunities via MS teams. This includes environmental volunteering. SFC participates in Climate Week every year - travel was the focus in 2023 (see below.) Last year's focus was on adaptation including home growing and other themes. We will deliver an internal seminar to staff in early 2024 on measures they can take to reduce home energy bills, and grants for renewable energy installations.</p> <p><b>Active travel</b> - The 2023 carbon report to the Scottish Government highlights revisions to SFC's internal travel policy to align closer with the <a href="#">current SG carbon compliance guidance</a> for public bodies. EAUC Scotland delivered an internal travel seminar to SFC colleagues on international aviation and climate change as part of climate week in 2023 with legacy materials retained on our intranet. We also launched our revised travel policy at this time. We will undertake a travel survey in early 2024 to establish better data on our commuting emissions (and our overall emissions baseline). SFC has a Cyclescheme – a tax efficient scheme that allows staff to save on their tax and NI whilst buying a bicycle and bike equipment. Staff select a bike/equipment and obtain a voucher from the scheme, paying back the costs over an agreed period of time direct from salary. HMRC tax (income and NI) savings benefits reduce the cost of purchasing the bike. A final payment transfers ownership to the employee.</p>



**Procurement and ICT** – We are reviewing our own procurement policy in 2023 including environmental sustainability. SFC aligns itself with the Scottish Public Sector Green ICT Strategy where possible. Our two main ICT suppliers are now Dell and Microsoft. Dell have published an Environment, Social and Governance Report for 2023. Laptops for SFC staff were refreshed in 2021-2022. Models purchased for most users are the DELL 5520 including a manufacturing process that reduces carbon, energy and water consumption. Laptops decommissioned are to be recycled and will be repurposed using the APUC Waste Management Framework (See more information about APUC below).

**Governance including adaptation** – SFC complies with the Scottish Public Finance Manual and Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM). We are aware of HMT guidance to the UK public sector on TCFD (Taskforce for Climate-related Financial Disclosures) issued in July 2023. SFC’s net zero team contributed as part of a panel session on TCFD at the UK Government Finance Function conference in September 2023 with other UK public sector bodies’ finance teams from the Sustainable Finance Network including HMT, DEFRA and MOD. This discussed integration of climate risk with financial risk, planning and reporting. We note the recent emergence of TNFD (nature-based disclosures) in parallel.

We are members of the Adaptation Scotland Benchmarking Group (now the Public Sector Climate Adaptation Network.) SFC undertook the Adaptation Scotland starter pack in early 2023 with the intention to complete the full benchmarking tool, including two initial internal adaptation workshops in early 2023, one on SFC’s operational emissions, and one on SFC’s capital levers. More work will be needed, particularly in establishing appropriate links with SFC’s risk register, business continuity and governance areas, and in embedding adaptation appropriately through specific sector levers that we hold. We seek to align appropriately with the outcomes in the current and new Scottish Climate Change Adaptation Plan of the Scottish Government. The climate resilience contributions of Scotland’s tertiary education and research bodies span key areas under the NPF including education and economy, and contribute to community transition (local, national and global) aligned with the SCAAP outcomes.





**SFC's role with the sector:**

Estates and place-making:

Our capital infrastructure investments in colleges and universities support delivery of climate targets, resilience and adaptation e.g., decarbonisation of heating, and contribute to broader city or region adaptation and resilience planning, including net zero place making.

[SFC's Financial Transactions](#) have been focused in recent years on targeted carbon reduction/climate emergency related projects within university estates e.g. retrofit projects.

The [College Infrastructure Strategy](#) (2022) and its associated [Delivery Plan](#) (2023) require colleges to provide evidence on how investment will address climate change and meet the institution's 'pathway to net zero' when applying for infrastructure investment. The CIS is set to consider adaptation in relation to estates and place.

Through SFC's funding agreement with EAUC Scotland (around £150k.p.a), and since the last biodiversity return, EAUC have provided extensive support to the tertiary education sector to become climate-adapted, including the following key tools and resources:

- Developed and launched a [climate risk register tool for the Scottish tertiary education sector](#) with Adaptation Scotland in November 2023. The features include a template for the assessment of climate vulnerability to institutional assets and operations, an institutional Exposure Assessment based on current and future climatic conditions, a risk register template to manage risks, assign impact and likelihood scores, and identify actions and a scoring matrix to prioritise actions as well as a Climate Adaptation Action Plan template, a weather incident log and campus flood risk templates.
- Launched together with AUDE (Association of Higher Education Directors of Estates) and BUFDG (British Universities Finance Directors Group) a cost of net zero calculator for institutions to map the [cost of their net zero transition pathways](#) including key emissions reduction measures.
- Developed and launched further carbon reduction and reporting guidance for the tertiary education and research sector in recent years including e.g. [business travel](#) and [student flights](#) guides.
- Continued to produce GHG (carbon) emissions synthesis reports for the whole Scottish tertiary sector, including the [latest report](#). The findings show that absolute emissions for the Scottish college and



university sector during 2021-22 were 722,701 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e), up from 321,591tCO<sub>2</sub>e in 2020-21, mostly due to increased reporting of Scope 3 emissions. EAUC also produced a sector-facing carbon [compliance checklist](#) summarising the SG guidance for the sector.

- Supported institutions with best practice in developing whole-institutional responses including leadership and response maturity benchmarking, and topic support networks for tertiary staff in a host of areas, from greening buildings to integrating sustainability in teaching and learning. (Full suite of EAUC support to tertiary institutions can be found here - [Scotland | EAUC](#))

The SFC also funds APUC around £3 million per annum, who support [sustainable procurement strategy and activities sector-wide](#).

SFC provides around £8 million to JISC who support digital services for tertiary education bodies in the UK, including a net zero by 2040 trajectory.

#### Governance, impact and teaching:

SFC's Accounts Direction to [universities](#) and to [colleges](#) ask them to comply with the requirements of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. Institutions need to observe the [Statement of Recommended Practice \(SoRP\)](#) in the production of annual financial statements. Universities are also required to agree a [Financial Memorandum](#) in return for the funding SFC provides.

SFC's outcome agreements, the cornerstone of our relationship with Scotland's colleges, universities and specialist institutions, ask them to demonstrate climate leadership and a whole-institutional response on environmental sustainability (all functions of institutions and all activities). From the 2023-24 academic year, outcome agreements specifically include [climate assurance provision](#). Responses by institutions may include relevant key information on climate risk/resilience/adaptation/biodiversity/resource stewardship or efficiency/circularity/ecosystem services and nature-restorative or nature-regenerative activity. In our funding and policy context, we expect institutions may take a broad interpretation of adaptation to potentially also include organisational adaptation i.e. the organization's approach to transitioning employees, culture, physical and natural assets, securing service delivery, and working with partners/stakeholders.



UK and Ireland Green Gowns Awards 2023 – Scottish institutions continue to make leading contributions in spearheading these awards. This year SFC funded the Impact award and participated in two judging panels including for this award - [Leading the way \(sfc.ac.uk\)](https://www.sfc.ac.uk)

We are answering the call from young people and others in the workforce for meaningful involvement in the just transition, green job opportunities and careers, and supporting the forward delivery of the SG's just transition plans and green economic plans, through our investments in education provision for undergraduates and postgraduates and sustainability upskilling and reskilling in a number of contexts, for example:

- The UK wide '[Skills and Net Zero](#)' expert advisory group report from May 2023, led by Edinburgh Climate Change Institute's Professor Dave Reay found that skills gaps in the UK economy threaten our transition to Net Zero within committed deadlines. Urgent action across education, government, and industry is crucial to bridge the skills gap and secure a skilled workforce for a successful Net Zero future, including transforming curriculae and prioritising net zero skills across disciplines, increasing investment, and utilising skills demand data in regional contexts, working with industry.
- Our investments and expertise underpin delivery of the SG's Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan. In 2020-2023 we have been a co-delivery partner with SDS on the CESAP Implementation Steering Group. We Chaired CESAP's Education Subgroup. As of [18 December 2023](#) there are plans to integrate CESAP (green skills activity in all sectors) with SG Just Transition Plans and other forward plans. SFC will continue as a member of the Ministerially Chaired CESAP Implementation Steering Group.
- Our core funding of around £350k.pa for the [Energy Skills Partnership](#) builds capability and capacity in the college sector to support net zero emerging skills priorities.
- Our delivery of Foundation and Graduate Apprenticeships and specific upskilling/reskilling funds on behalf of the SG underpin delivery of green skills supply chains in support of the National Strategy for Economic Transformation, and Scotland's Just Transition Plans.
- Under our outcome agreement with EAUC in FY 2023-2024, EAUC published a [Green Careers Guide](#) providing an accessible guide for students (and an accompanying [careers staff guide](#)) on how to find a sustainability job.
- SFC has also participated in the SG's Learning for Sustainability Group with other Scottish education public bodies. EAUC - Scotland, under the terms of its recent outcome agreements with SFC, is supporting colleges and [universities](#) in considering how to embed learning for sustainability in their curriculae or graduate outcomes, sharing [best practice](#) across the whole Scottish sector, including ensuring that students have the skills to engage in and be resilient through the climate emergency. Key



bodies are moving in concert e.g. see [GTC professional standards for college lecturers in Scotland](#). SFC's [Tertiary Quality project](#) highlights opportunities for institutions to collaborate and innovate.

- We have contributed to informal just transition engagement sessions of the SG in 2023 and on an ongoing basis to the Scottish Offshore Wind Energy Council (SOWEC) Skills Group and other sector-specific skills groups.
- Regional Tertiary Pathfinders by SFC are designed to facilitate alignment of skills provision in Scotland with the needs of employers and society, beginning in [two pilot regions](#): South of Scotland and North East Scotland including rural skills provision in the former and the energy transition in the latter, utilising existing regional partnerships. The project [report](#) summarises data from both regions on skills provision. Insights are being used to make recommendations for the wider education and skills system.

#### Research & Innovation:

SFC is developing [Alliances for Research Challenges](#) in the sector including food and energy sustainability.

The sector is actively working on current national challenges from carbon reporting to heat decarbonisation to sustainable transport, the circular economy, sustainable chemicals, blue natural capital and many others. The latest [RAND study](#) analyses impact case studies submitted to the Research Excellence Framework 2021 by Scottish Universities - Pages 68-80, and 83-90 refer to net zero/sustainability.) The RAND report states, *“Scottish universities have contributed towards environmental impacts, including net-zero goals locally and internationally. Research from Scottish universities has directly benefited the environment, e.g. by developing and implementing new carbon capture and storage technologies and tools to measure GHG emissions accurately. It has contributed to developing climate policy across the UK and internationally – including net-zero target setting – and informed change across agricultural, construction and energy sectors, among others. Many of these institutions have informed policymakers regarding climate mitigation strategies and regulations and worked closely with industrial partners to translate their research into commercially viable solutions, generating economic value and benefiting the environment.”*

SFC is a member of the steering group for [UKRI's Environmental Research Concordat](#) for the UK higher education and research sector, making research practice more sustainable.

**Collaboration and partnership** – As described in detail above SFC's funding and activity with the sector underpins both direct partnership working undertaken by SFC with key public partners including SDS, education and enterprise bodies at the strategic level of the Scottish public sector landscape and supports



	<p>partnership working by individual institutions with their public and private partners. Lastly, we collaborate with other Scottish public bodies on key aspects of net zero corporate transformation/compliance, e.g. SFC net zero hub staff are working with ZWS, ECCI, SSN, Adaptation Scotland and others on net zero organisational transformation and best practice. SFC staff are proactively sharing best practice and learning with other public bodies and receiving peer support in return through at least two collaborative working groups of Scottish public bodies on net zero/sustainability transformation. SFC net zero hub staff are engaged with our net zero delivery partners and key tertiary sector contacts to understand the opportunities and challenges on the ground and respond appropriately to the needs of the sector. There could be more engagement of SFC locally by partners who may be shaping City of Edinburgh transformation plans for transport/energy/adaptation near our offices.</p>
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### SECTION 3: MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY

Please outline any steps your organisation has taken to incorporate biodiversity measures into its wider policies, plans or strategies. This should include decision-making structures and staff and organisational roles and responsibilities.

<p><b>Guidance on completing this section</b></p>	<p>Outline any of your own body’s policies, plans and strategies that refer to biodiversity, or that may affect biodiversity positively or negatively, and describe how these are reflected in the structure of your organisation.</p> <p>These may include policies on consideration of biodiversity in estate management, procurement policies and purchasing decisions, and Sustainability and Climate Change commitments.</p> <p>Detail any areas in which your organisation has most successfully implemented mainstreaming of biodiversity, including through working with others, or raising awareness of biodiversity or nature.</p>
<p><b>Links to related resources</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case study - <a href="#">Procurement by the Scottish Courts and Tribunal (SCTS) Services</a>.</li> <li>• Guidance on <a href="#">Scotland's Pollinator Strategy, projects, resources</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Text Field</b></p>	<p>See sections one and two.</p>



## SECTION 4: NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS, CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY

[Climate change](#) is a direct driver of biodiversity loss. Some species are dying out while others are being displaced due to warmer air temperatures, extreme weather patterns, and higher sea levels. As well as being a direct driver of biodiversity loss, climate change also worsens the other drivers. For example it enables quicker spread of non-native invasive species. Combined action for biodiversity loss and climate change can be achieved through nature-based solutions.

This reporting section provides the opportunity for your organisation to provide details on how you are supporting the positive contribution biodiversity can make to building resilience, and helping nature to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

### How has your organisation integrated biodiversity into nature based solutions to the climate emergency and other socio-economic outcomes?

<p><b>Guidance on completing this section</b></p>	<p>Nature-based solutions can play a vital role in helping us to protect and enhance biodiversity, achieve net zero targets, and improve quality of life.</p> <p>If relevant, you may wish to report on any processes or activities that your organisation has undertaken, including within your buildings and workforce, and projects that you have delivered.</p> <p>Integration might include incorporating biodiversity into nature-based solutions to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The climate emergency, for example by developing climate change strategies that include nature, investing in green infrastructure, and taking action for pollinators.</li> <li>• Build inclusive economic growth, for example by supporting nature based industries, or key natural visitor attractions</li> <li>• Health and wellbeing, for example by improving access to nature for all.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Links to related resources</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information on how <a href="#">urban nature-based solutions</a> can help Scotland's towns and cities mitigate and adapt to climate change providing guidance and examples.</li> <li>• The <a href="#">Helping nature to adapt</a> webpage contains useful information on making use of nature's capacity to adapt to change as one of our best tools for managing climate change impacts, including through managing native woodlands and restoring peatlands.</li> <li>• The publication <a href="#">People, Place and the Climate Emergency</a> includes examples and information on local nature-based solutions to deliver a range of socio-economic outcomes.</li> </ul>



<b>Text Field</b>	<b>See sections one and two.</b>  <b>Commentary</b> – SFC’s main contribution to Scotland’s climate emergency response will be in supporting the tertiary education and research sector in Scotland to contribute to socio-economic outcomes as part of a just transition. However, we acknowledge that in some areas we may have more direct levers on biodiversity including for example through our approach to tertiary sector estates funding (adaptation). And, in its broadest sense, we encourage a climate-adapted sector including Governance, strategy and targets.
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## SECTION 5: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

### Workforce skills and training

<p><b>Guidance on completing this section</b></p>	<p>Detail activities that have been undertaken to support the development of your workforce, particularly in relation to skills relevant to biodiversity, nature, or outdoor learning and community engagement in the natural environment. Identify any opportunities that are available to your staff to take part in practical action.</p> <p>Activities might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting volunteering days, for example with environmental Non-Governmental Organisations;</li> <li>• Staff training, education and capacity building;</li> <li>• Staff networks that aim to deliver on or promote objectives related to biodiversity or nature;</li> <li>• Hosting conferences, exhibitions and events;</li> <li>• Collaborative working with other organisations and sharing best practice;</li> <li>• Information about nature hosted on your webpage or blog posts;</li> <li>• Ideas on <a href="#">volunteering outdoors</a>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Text Field</b></p>	<p><b>See sections one and two.</b></p> <p>In addition to information already provided in previous sections on staff education, volunteering, climate week activity, and workshops, in terms of informal communications and support, a set of intranet resources has been created for SFC staff on the climate emergency and our response that they can access at any time and will be updated. SFC’s external website has had a revamp for net zero and the climate emergency since around 2022 including more regular news items and blogs from the Scottish sector highlighting and showcasing its leading response. Two workshops were also held internally in 2022 with staff to launch the Net Zero Framework and establish the kind of support staff members wished to have in order to help them deliver the Framework. Specific net zero support is being provided in line with staff reactive requests by the net zero hub.</p>

## SECTION 6: RESEARCH AND MONITORING

**Describe any research activities that your organisation has undertaken that may be relevant to biodiversity or nature**

<b>Guidance on completing this section</b>	Detail any relevant research activities undertaken, if any. This might include research papers, surveys or reports undertaken by your organisation.
<b>Text Field</b>	N/A.

**What follow-up actions or monitoring have you undertaken to assess the impacts of the actions you have taken? How have you measured this?**

<b>Guidance on completing this section</b>	<p>If relevant, you may wish to report on monitoring of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activities relating to biodiversity, sustainability, climate change or nature more generally;</li> <li>• Implementation of relevant strategies or policies;</li> <li>• Organisational capability or development in relation to biodiversity or the natural world.</li> </ul>
<b>Links to related resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">NatureScot reports on many different surveys</a> to better understand how people in Scotland use, enjoy and value the natural environment.</li> <li>• Information on biodiversity data, including obtaining and sharing data from Local Records Centres <a href="#">Biodiversity - where to find data</a>.</li> <li>• The <a href="#">State of Scotland's Nature report</a> provides a useful overview.</li> </ul>
<b>Text Field</b>	N/A



## SECTION 7: BIODIVERSITY HIGHLIGHTS AND CHALLENGES

Describe your organisation’s main achievements for biodiversity over the reporting period and what you are most proud of (this can include processes, plans, projects, partnerships, events and actions).

<b>Guidance on completing this section</b>	<p>Examples of key achievements might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actions taken to improve biodiversity through processes followed by your organisation;</li> <li>• Actions taken to improve biodiversity on your premises;</li> <li>• Meeting any strategic aims in relation to biodiversity or nature;</li> <li>• Completion of any projects with relevance to biodiversity or nature;</li> <li>• Volunteering days or time invested.</li> </ul>
<b>Text Field</b>	<b>See sections one and two.</b>

Looking ahead, what do you think will be the main challenges over the next three years?

<b>Guidance on completing this section</b>	<p>Challenges might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic and resource pressures;</li> <li>• Delivery of cross-cutting actions;</li> <li>• Preventing further loss of habitats and species;</li> <li>• Effective management of invasive non-native species;</li> <li>• Pressures for space;</li> <li>• Need to meet targets;</li> <li>• Encouraging enhanced partnership working.</li> </ul>
<b>Text Field</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic and resource pressures</li> <li>• Delivery of cross-cutting actions</li> <li>• Need to meet targets</li> <li>• Ongoing education bodies’ reforms may also impact any plans relating to our operational emissions.</li> </ul>