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Broads Authority declare a Biodiversity Emergency
 *The Broads has been losing species at a rate of six per decade for half a century. The Authority has stated that urgent action is required to protect wildlife species from the impact of climate change and environmental pollution.*

Iconic species in the Broads are at risk from warmer, wetter winters, and sea-level rise as a result of climate change. The greater frequency and intensity of storms will also increase the risk of sewage runoff in the Broads. These multiple stressors threaten the survival of some plants and animals.

The aim of the declaration is to raise public and political awareness, emphasising the urgency for immediate action to protect and restore the environment. It will foster stronger partnerships with local stakeholders, encouraging collaboration on critical issues.

Key to enhancing biodiversity in a changing climate is better management of water in the Broads catchment area – so that the land retains water in the floodplains during winter (without increasing flooding) to then be more available for nature in the summer months.

Broads Authority, Environment Policy Adviser Andrea Kelly, said:

*“Measures to enhance biodiversity through better land and water management in the Broads are the missing puzzle pieces that will allow communities in the Broads to adapt to changing climates, reduce the impact of flooding, and create diverse ecosystems that support more wildlife.*

*“However, time is running out and we need immediate action. This declaration sets out how we can start to reverse species decline so that people and wildlife can become resilient in facing climate change.”*

The Water Management Alliance and the Internal Drainage Boards are key partners. However, there are many challenges they face, including aging infrastructure and pumps which require costly replacement, and must also be fish and eel friendly.

Phil Cammile, Chief Executive of the Water Management Alliance said:

*“We acknowledge the climate emergency unfolding within our Broadland Internal Drainage Board catchments. The growing frequency of intense rainfall, followed by prolonged droughts, is already causing serious environmental challenges, including threats to food security.*

*“Urgent investment in critical pumping and water management infrastructure is essential to ensure it is resilient, adaptable, and equipped to manage flooding while safely storing freshwater, the key to improving drought resilience.*

*“To protect what matters most, we must collaborate and innovate. Together, we can accelerate efforts to restore, protect, and enhance the environment while driving forward sustainable agriculture, housing, tourism and wider economic growth now and for future generations.”*

The Biodiversity Emergency Declaration would be delivered using the ‘Broads Nature Recovery Strategy’ and its plan as the mechanisms to monitor change.

The Authority recognises the challenges facing farming and the environment. Examples of partnership work in the Broads include the [Broads Biodiversity Partnership](https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/looking-after/managing-land-and-water/biodiversity-and-nature-recovery), [Broads Peatland Partnership](https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/looking-after/projects/broads-peat-discovery-project), and [Farming in Protected Landscapes](https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/looking-after/projects/farming-in-protected-landscapes) which support farmers with financial incentives to develop farming practices that adapt to climate change, restore peatland soils and work to improve water management, not at the cost of farming.

Read the full Biodiversity Emergency Declaration on our website here and in the Notes to editors:
<https://www.broads-authority.gov.uk/about-us/committees/broads-authority/broads-authority-29-november-2024>

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## Notes to editors

1. **The Broads Authority**

The Broads Authority has the important job of looking after the Broads and the interests of the people who live, work and visit there. The Broads Authority has two purposes identical to the other national park family members relating to conservation and promoting people's understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the area. It also has a third purpose to look after the waterways for navigation. In addition, it is a planning authority and has a duty to foster the economic and social well-being of its communities.

1. **Biodiversity emergency statement - Broads Authority**

## Context

As part of the family of Protected Landscapes in England, we recognise that no single site or

organisation can address the exacerbating impact of climate change, water and air pollution, invasive species, population growth and development on biodiversity loss.

The Broads Authority notes with concern reports from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy

Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) on global species and habitat loss,

and also that the Broads has been losing species at a rate of six per decade for half a century.

Iconic species in the Broads are further at risk from the impact of climate change, including

warmer, wetter winters, and sea-level rise as well as pollution, invasive species, population growth and development pressures on biodiversity loss.

The Broads Biodiversity Audit demonstrates the importance of the Broads for UK rare species.

The Audit showed that nearly a third of the conservation priority species once found in the

Broads have not been recorded since 1988, with many confirmed to be no longer existing in

the Broads.

Healthy ecosystems, supported by good ecological condition and sustainable management,

deliver vital public goods such as food, recreation, tourism, water, abundant wildlife, and

landscape character. The Broads Authority aims to protect the biodiversity that underpins

these ecosystems, benefiting visitors, communities, and businesses in the Broads.

Protected Landscapes, like the Broads, hold unique cultural and personal significance, offering intimate spaces for connecting with nature. The Broads Authority plays an influential role in addressing the biodiversity crisis by inspiring land use choices and fostering a deeper connection between people and nature.

## Therefore, the Broads Authority resolves to:

* Declare its recognition of the global biodiversity emergency and the local impact this
* could have on Broads communities;
* Engage with a diverse range of partners: local authorities, environmental NGOs,
* farmers, the private sector, and local communities, to drive collective action;
* Adopt the Broads Nature Recovery Strategy and seek to implement the 2024-2029
* delivery plan towards biodiversity recovery in the Broads;
* Inspire behavioural change, through educational activities, by informing visitors and
* local communities to take active roles in conservation efforts;
* Support the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategies in Norfolk and
* Suffolk; and
* Develop initiatives in partnership which achieve large-scale benefits, including:
* Fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange;
* Expanding networks to enable habitat restoration and connection;
* Enhancing the Broads Authority estate to support native species;
* Supporting nature-based solutions; and
* Connecting with initiatives beyond the Broads to inspire conservation efforts

elsewhere.

This approach highlights the Authority’s commitment to reversing biodiversity loss while positioning the Broads as a leader in ecological resilience and nature recovery.

[**www.broads-authority.gov.uk**](http://www.broads-authority.gov.uk)

**For further information, images and interviews, please contact:**

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1) Mutton’s Mill on Halvergate marshes in winter