**SNH PRESS RELEASE**

**EMBARGO UNTIL 12.00 Monday 6 May, 2019**

**Major report on state of nature published**

**Scottish Natural Heritage responds to IPBES report**

Experts from across the globe have published a report on the state of biodiversity which describes the transformative changes that need to be considered when the 2030 global biodiversity targets are agreed in China next year.

Three years in preparation, the IPBES report brings together evidence from nearly 15,000 references, including scientific papers and government information. The report finds that around 1 million animal and plant species are now threatened with extinction.

Scotland’s nature agency SNH has welcomed the report and the challenge it sets for nature based solutions to climate change.

Chief Executive Francesca Osowska said:

“This is a major step forward in understanding the state of nature globally, clearly showing how nature and climate change are inseparable. A greater collective endeavour to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 is vital.

“The IPBES report shows that the pressures on nature are increasing. We know that the loss of species and ecosystems is a global and generational threat to human well-being.  The Report also highlights that it is not too late, and that decisive action now to protect and restore nature can help to reverse the loss of biodiversity. It is also clear that enhancing and protecting our nature is part of the solution to the climate emergency.

Francesca goes on to state:

“The report shows that nature can be conserved and provide for people now and in the future but that we need transformative change.

“We recognise the urgency of the task before us and, building on the sustained work over many years with our partners to deliver the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy including the Aichi targets, we will work closely with the Scottish Government, our partners and the people of Scotland to help set the agenda.

“We are already working to protect our landscapes, animals and plants. But we have to move to a low carbon economy - which will have major implications for how we manage our land and seas.  A nature rich environment brings opportunities and challenges for us all.

“With the expertise and partnerships we have in place Scotland can secure world-leading nature based solutions.”

Background:

Our biodiversity strategy works to:

* protect and restore biodiversity on land and in our seas, and to support healthy ecosystems
* connect people with the natural world, for their health and well-being, and to involve them more in decision making
* maximise the benefits for Scotland of a diverse natural environment and the services it provides, contributing to sustainable economic growth.
* Work on major projects such as Peatland Action and Dynamic Coast is making these habitats far more resilient to climate change, and contributing to Carbon savings.

The £2m Biodiversity Challenge Fund adds to our work to help deliver Scotland’s contribution to current global targets for biodiversity.

Across our National Nature Reserves we have already put in place work to ensure eight of these are far more resilient to climate change. Details of SNH work on NNRs: <https://www.nature.scot/climate-change/taking-action/adapting-change/helping-nature-adapt>

The Biodiversity Assessment offers an integrated overview of where the world stands in relation to key international goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Paris Agreement on climate change. It examines causes of biodiversity and ecosystem change, the implications for people, policy options and likely future pathways over the next three decades if current trends continue, and other scenarios.

Key Messages from the Global assessment

* Nature underpins and sustains quality of life, but its contributions to people are deteriorating worldwide
* Direct and indirect drivers of change have accelerated during the past 50 years
* Short-term goals for protecting nature and achieving sustainability cannot be met by current trajectories, but goals for 2030, 2050 and beyond can be achieved through transformative change
* Nature can be conserved, restored and used sustainably while simultaneously meeting other global societal goals through proven solutions and transformative change

Background on IPBES Plenary:  <https://www.ipbes.net/plenary>

IPBES report ‘*Summary for policymakers of the global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services – unedited advance version*’ published in IPBES website Monday 6th May at 13.00 (Paris; 12.00 UK time).  See <https://twitter.com/IPBES>