

Natural Capital

An overview of the Office for National Statistics and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs natural capital project and all related publications.

Contact:

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To be announced

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1 . Overview

- In brief, UK Natural Capital is comprised by all the ecosystem services which UK natural assets provide. Natural assets include soil, air, water and all living things.
- Accounting for natural capital is important as many of the most valuable services it provides are intangible so they're often overlooked. Therefore, prior to creating natural capital accounts decisions can frequently be made without best representing the environment.
- We are constantly expanding and developing our work to stay on path with our 2020 Roadmap. We welcome all those with expertise in any area of future work to contact us at environment.accounts@ons.gov.uk

2 . Publications

Roadmaps:

- [2020 Roadmap](#)
Released: 12 July 2018
Article
- [2015 Roadmap](#)
Released: 20th March 2015
Article
- [2012 Roadmap](#)
Released: October 2012
Article

Natural Capital monetary estimates:

- [Scottish natural capital: Ecosystem Service Accounts, 2019](#)
Released: 22 March 2019
Statistical bulletin
- [UK natural capital: Ecosystem service accounts 1997 to 2015](#)
Released: 30th January 2018
Statistical bulletin
- [UK Natural Capital: Monetary Estimates, 2016](#)
Released: 30th November 2016
Statistical Bulletin
- [UK Natural Capital: Monetary Estimates, 2014](#)
Released: 2nd May 2014
Statistical Bulletin

Habitat accounts include:

- [UK natural capital: urban accounts](#)
Released: 08 August 2019
Statistical bulletin
- [UK natural capital: mountains, moorland and heath accounts](#) Released: 22 July 2019
Statistical bulletin
- [UK natural capital: ecosystem accounts for urban areas](#)
Released: 12 July 2018
Statistical bulletin
- [Ecosystem Accounts for Freshwater, Farmland and Woodland](#)
Released: 25th July 2017
Statistical Bulletin

Cross-cutting accounts include:

- [UK natural capital: peatlands](#) Released: 22 July 2019
Statistical Bulletin
- [Carbon Stock](#)
Released: 28 June 2016
Statistical Bulletin
- [Protected Areas](#)
Released: September 2015
Report
- [Land Cover](#)
Released: 17 March 2015
Statistical Bulletin
- [Land Use](#)
Released: 2013
Statistical Bulletin

Scoping studies include:

- [Semi-natural Grassland](#) Released: 19 April 2018
- [Urban](#)
Released: October 2017
- [Mountains, Moorlands and Heathlands](#)
Released: 21st July 2017
- [Coastal Margins](#)
Released: 28th June 2016
- [Peatlands](#)
Released: March 2015
- [Spatially Disaggregated Woodland and Marine](#)
Released: September 2014

Methodology reports:

- [Scoping UK Urban Natural Capital Accounts – Extension to develop temperature regulation estimates – NR0172](#)
Released: June 2018
Methodology Report
- [Scoping UK Urban Natural Capital Accounts – Extending noise regulation estimates – NR0170](#)
Released: July 2018
Methodology Report
- [Principles of Natural Capital Accounting](#)
Released: 24th February 2017
Methodology Report
- [Discounting for Environmental Accounts](#)
Released: 30th November 2016
Methodology Report
- [Valuing Flood-Regulating Services for Inclusion in the UK Ecosystem Accounts](#)
Released: 30th November 2016
Methodology Report
- [Reviewing Cultural Services Valuation Methodology for Inclusion in Aggregate UK Natural Capital Estimates](#)
Released: 30th November 2016
Methodology Report

Seminar notes:

- [2013 Pimlico Seminar Summary Notes and Supporting Documents](#)
Released: 11th November 2013
Summary Notes

Articles:

- [UK air pollution removal: how much pollution does vegetation remove in your area?](#)
Released 30th July 2018
- [The UK environment - fighting pollution, improving our health and saving us money](#) Released 2nd October 2017

3 . Why it's important to measure natural capital

Natural assets provide a wide range of ecosystem services that make human life possible: the food we eat, the water we drink and the plant materials we use for fuel, building materials and medicines, to name a few. They also provide less visible services such as climate regulation, the natural flood defences provided by forests, removal of air pollutants by vegetation, and the pollination of crops by insects. Then there's the inspiration we take from wildlife and the natural environment. Yet despite nature being priceless, it is not valueless.

We take a balanced approach to producing natural capital accounts; which entails creating stock and flow accounts of specific habitats or services. This means we are able to focus development on key accounts where the policy interest lies. All these specific accounts are then amalgamated into a national UK natural capital account which provides a “quick overview” of UK natural capital. The ultimate goal of the ONS-Defra project is to incorporate UK natural capital into the UK Environmental Accounts by 2020.

Natural Capital is predominantly hidden, partial or missing from the nation's balance sheet. However, by providing valuations of the UK's natural capital, decision makers can better include the environment in their plans to allocate resources to develop, and promote the growth of, the economy.