

Your plan for nature – a few ideas to get you going

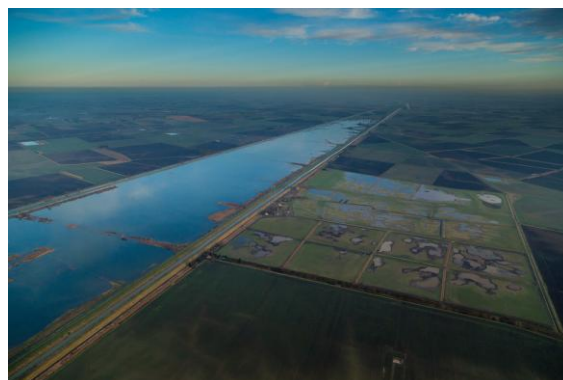
- Send your ideas to peter.morris@wwt.org.uk , we'll collate them and pass them on to the Government Minister responsible, Rory Stewart.
- Alternatively send Rory a tweet - each idea ends with a suggested tweet.

Idea 1: A 'national grid' for water

Water is absolutely vital to us on a daily basis. But we don't have a joined up approach. Each bit of the system — water and sewerage, flood defences, and land management — has developed separately, in a haphazard manner. There's no coordination in the way that we abstract water, control pollution, or manage flooding.

For other complex systems, like railways, electricity and gas, and communications, we have a single System Operator in control to manage the system. Is it time to try the same for water? Let's have a **Water Systems Operator** – a sort of 'national grid' for water - to look after each of England's 83 catchments.

Tweet: [@RoryStewartUK](https://twitter.com/RoryStewartUK) let's clean up water for wildlife. Set up a Water Systems Operator & make it a great [#planfornature](https://twitter.com/planfornature) [@WWTworldwide](https://twitter.com/WWTworldwide) [#opendefra](https://twitter.com/opendefra)



Idea 2: Tackling pollution

Perhaps the most obvious thing we can do is stop polluting our environment. The Government has taken some really positive steps, like helping to reduce plastic bag use. But there are still some really big pollutants that we need to cut out.

For example, recreational shooting is still responsible for thousands of tonnes of toxic lead in our countryside, which is responsible for the death of hundreds of thousands of birds every year in the UK.



We also know that some of this lead enters the human food chain. There are affordable, effective alternatives available, like steel, so it's time to phase out the use of lead ammunition for good.

Another big one is pollution of our waterways by run-off from farmland. Pesticides and fertilisers flow off agricultural land into our rivers and streams. Did you know that **only around a third** of our rivers, streams, pools and lakes are in good condition?

Tweet: @RoryStewartUK please deal with contaminants like lead ammunition & farm pollution & make it a great #planfornature @WWTworldwide #opendefra

Idea 3: Bringing nature to people?

Nature reserves are amazing places for wildlife, but nature shouldn't be confined to isolated oases. Over the next few years, we're bound to build more houses and roads to try to tackle our housing shortages. But let's make sure there's room for nature in our lives and in our landscapes by planning for wildlife lines – oak avenues, wetland waterways, or species stepping-stones – the vital habitats we need to link up population pockets across the UK.



The Government has just set up a new [National Infrastructure Commission](#) to advise on the need for new developments like roads and rail links. Let's make sure that the NIC also considers the links our wildlife needs to join up precious fragments of habitat by planning for green and blue infrastructure, or wildlife lines.

Tweet: @RoryStewartUK plz plan wildlife lines with @Andrew_Adonis: green & blue infrastructure for a great #planfornature @WWTworldwide #opendefra

Idea 4: SUDS not floods

Did you know that over **three million homes** are already at risk of flooding and many of our drainage systems are over-capacity? Annual damages from surface water flooding could be over £2.2 billion and climate change and increased urbanisation will produce an additional 30% to 110% increase to current surface water flooding damage in years to come.



“SUDS” stands for Sustainable Drainage Systems. By building features like green roofs, ponds and permeable paving we can regulate storm water flows, reduce pollution downstream and recharge groundwater supplies. They're also brilliant for water quality, health and wellbeing and wildlife habitat. Freshwater

and wetland habitats make up just 3% of the UK, but support around 10% of our species. SUDS can bring this watery wildlife right alongside us.

Earlier this year the Government decided not to require SUDS to be designed into most new building developments. That's despite its own figures suggesting this decision will cause over £100 million of flood damage each year, which will be paid for by the public through taxes, higher water bills and insurance premiums.

Tweet: @RoryStewartUK please work with @BrandonLewis for homes with #SUDS not #floods and make it a great #planfornature @WWTworldwide #opendefra

Idea 5: Restore nature, beat climate change

We know that nature is first to feel the effects of climate change. Just think of ocean acidification and changing habitats. But we often forget that nature is also part of the solution. Did you know that peat wetlands alone store more carbon in the soil than rainforests do? They store a third of the world's total despite only taking up 3% of the world's surface.



And, of course, nature can help us adapt to the challenges climate change will bring. Huge projects like our new manmade working wetland at [Stearth Marshes](#) use natural wetland processes to both create wonderful wildlife habitat as well as protecting thousands of homes and businesses from rising sea levels.

So, we need to make sure that we join up restoring nature with the fight against climate change. And, as we work to decarbonise our economy, let's do it in a way that contributes to nature.

Write to Rory or tweet your support: [@RoryStewartUK](#) please work with [@AmberRudd_MP](#) for nature-friendly renewables and make it a great [#planfornature](#) [@WWTworldwide](#) [#opendefra](#)

Idea 6: Natural wealth fund

Saving nature is good value, but it can't be done on a shoestring. Over the next four years, the Environment Department is facing huge cuts of around a third of its budget. Part of the problem is that the value that DEFRA brings isn't measured in money, it's measured in a healthier environment and public benefits like thriving wildlife and clean air.

One way to help is to make sure that



corporations who take more from the environment than they put back pay some of the way to restoring nature—the “polluter pays principle”. This makes things fairer for greener businesses and can help bring extra cash for the environment.

We support the Natural Capital Committee’s idea of a levy on the use of non-renewable natural resources like oil, gas and coal. In 1990 Norway started such a fund, based on oil profits, and it has already grown to be the largest in the world, approaching \$900bn.

Tweet: [@RoryStewartUK](#) please work with [@George_Osborne](#) to establish a Natural Wealth Fund & make it a great #planfornature @WWTworldwide #opendefra

Idea 7: A Natural Wealth Statement

Each year the Budget tells Parliament and the public how our economy is doing. That informs every decision we make. But our economy – and our very day to day survival – depends on the air, water and natural world around us. It’s time to recognise that nature is essential for our economy and for who we are.

The 25 year plan should set clear, ambitious targets for our environment: thriving wildlife, clean air, clean water, and access to nature for everyone. We already measure [many of these things](#), but they’re not given the time or attention they need in Parliament. Let’s ask Rory Stewart UK to deliver a Natural Wealth Statement to Parliament each year.

Tweet: [@RoryStewartUK](#) please give an annual Natural Wealth Statement in Parliament and make it a great #planfornature @WWTworldwide #opendefra

