

Landscape Action Plan

2026-2027

 Northern Ireland Environment Agency
Gníomhaireacht Comhshaoil Thuaisceart Éireann
Norlin Airlan Environment Agency
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

 An Agency within the Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

Gníomhaireacht de chuid na Roinne
**Talmhaíochta, Comhshaoil
agus Gnóthaí Tuaithe**

An Agency wí'n the Depairtment o
**Fairmin, Environment
an' Kintra Matthers**

INTRODUCTION

Northern Ireland’s landscapes are among its most defining assets—rich in natural beauty, cultural heritage, and ecological value. They underpin biodiversity, climate resilience, and community well-being, while supporting sustainable tourism and rural economies. Yet these landscapes face mounting pressures from climate change, habitat fragmentation, pollution, and unsustainable land use.

The Landscape Action Plan forms a key component of the Environmental Improvement Plan for Northern Ireland, responding to the Strategic Environmental Outcome of creating “a healthy and accessible environment and landscapes everyone can connect with and enjoy.”

The Environmental Improvement Plan contains several overarching actions and targets which should be progressed over the next couple of years to support our landscapes in particular:

<u>Action</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>
Complete a landscape policy / legislation review.	31 st March 2027
Subject to policy / legislation review, publish a Landscape Strategy.	31 st March 2027
Develop a rolling multi-year Landscape Action Plan	December 2025

This plan fulfils the commitment to develop a multi-year Landscape Action Plan.

The plan outlined will take forward actions between 2025 and 2027 in support of our landscapes while a landscape policy / legislation review is undertaken and a Landscape Strategy is developed. After the Strategy has been developed a new Action Plan will be developed.

The Landscape Action Plan aims to promote resilient, cherished landscapes that benefit both people and nature—now and for future generations.

The action plan will be delivered through a coproduction process with Landscapes NI members

Landscape Action Plan

	<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsible</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>
1.	Undertake a review of the use of Landscape Character Assessments in Northern Ireland (Regional; Local and Seascapes) to inform how they should be updated in the future.	DAERA - NIEA	December 2026
2.	<p>Ensure that the rationale for the designation of each AONB designated under the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (Northern Ireland) 1985 (NCALO) is publicly accessible.</p> <p>The 4 purposes for designation under the NCALO are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserving or enhancing the natural beauty or amenities of that area; • Conserving wildlife, historic objects or natural phenomena within it; • Promoting its enjoyment by the public; • Providing or maintaining public access to it. 	DAERA - NIEA	December 2026
3.	<p>Ensure that each AONB has a Management Plan in place; and Review AONB management planning and create a revised framework for the strategic management of AONBs including consideration of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - topic areas that strategic AONB management should address, linked to the purposes for designation; - the naming convention of AONB Management Plans; and - resourcing options. 	DAERA - NIEA	March 2027
4.	Provide advice and guidance and create agreement about how 30 x 30 is related to and can be facilitated by AONB's and other iconic landscapes.	DAERA - NIEA	March 2027
5.	Establish an interdepartmental group on landscapes.	DAERA - NIEA	December 2026
6.	Develop the unadopted NI Landscape Charter into a series of Northern Ireland Landscape Principles with supporting guidance.	DAERA - NIEA	December 2026

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