

Flanders Moss

Location

Stirling

EcoCo Management Zone

SNH Mosses

Lead Partner

Scottish Natural Heritage



Site Description

At over 800 hectares, Flanders Moss is one of the largest lowland raised bog in Britain. It is a National Nature Reserve as well as a SSSI, GCR and SAC. Although much of the bog is in primary surface, some has been worked for peat extraction and drained. This has dried out the surface of the bog, allowing scrub and trees to encroach. SNH is working to restore the bog to favourable condition.

What are we going to do?

Through the EcoCo LIFE+ project, SNH will be carrying out a range of habitat restoration techniques. These will include installing new peat and plastic dams to block drainage ditches which have been causing the moss to lose water. Disturbed peatland surfaces will be flattened to enhance the capacity of the bog to restore through greater hydrological connectivity. Invasive trees and scrub will be removed from key target areas, with the cuttings chipped and used to create further dams to slow down water loss from the peat body.

What will this achieve?

This work will restore hydrological connectivity across the moss, improving its ecological condition and coherence. By re-wetting the disturbed habitats, a higher water table will be created, benefiting a range of rare bog species and reducing the density of invasive scrub and trees. In time, a more sustainable, natural habitat will be restored.

Links

www.nnr-scotland.org.uk

<http://gateway.snh.gov.uk/sitelink>

www.ecocolife.org.uk

What is ecological coherence?

The project has adopted an adapted version of a definition proposed by R. Catchpole (2013).

At the scale of the whole network, coherence is achieved when: the full range of variation in valued features is represented; replication of specific features occurs at different sites over a wide geographic area; dispersal, migration and genetic exchange of individuals is possible between relevant sites; all critical areas for rare, highly threatened and endemic species are included; and the network is resilient to disturbance or damage caused by natural and anthropogenic factors.

In order to determine ecological coherence for the project sites the main measurable parameters being considered are; patch size, biological diversity, habitat structural and functional connectivity, ecological functionality and presence of endangered, rare or endemic species.

In essence this can be summarised for habitats as **'more, bigger, better, and better connected'**.

Learn more at "Ecological Coherence Definitions in Policy and Practice - Final Report". R. Catchpole, Aspen International. Contract report to Scottish Natural Heritage, No. 41102

