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Shaping the Future of Beavers in Scotland: Strategy Development and Implementation

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Beaver Strategy 2022-2045



The creation of Scotland's *Beaver Strategy 2022–2045* involved a collaborative effort, bringing together more than 50 stakeholder organisations spanning conservation bodies, land management interests and government agencies.

Vision:

“Throughout Scotland, communities are supported in working together to maximise the ecosystem and wider benefits of beavers while minimising negative impacts.

The beaver population is actively expanded into appropriate areas; adaptive management and mitigation is used to protect assets and interests.”



Scottish Beaver Advisory Group (SBAG)

- To support its implementation, the Scottish Beaver Advisory Group (SBAG) was established with a remit to monitor progress, review emerging challenges, and provide guidance to delivery partners.
- SBAG produces an annual report every year. This report and the minutes from the meetings are available on the NatureScot website.





Challenges in Implementation

Beavers can create wetland habitats which have a broad range of biodiversity benefits as well as natural flood management features.



However, their work also conflicts with existing land use and food production. Farmers and crofters seek compensation for damage/loss of land due to beaver impacts.



Change in Approach

- Deep dive workshops on recurrent issues. These workshops in 2025 were focused on i) new catchments for translocation and ii) floodbanks.
- This year, the focus is on communications and funding mechanisms to support landowners to host beavers.



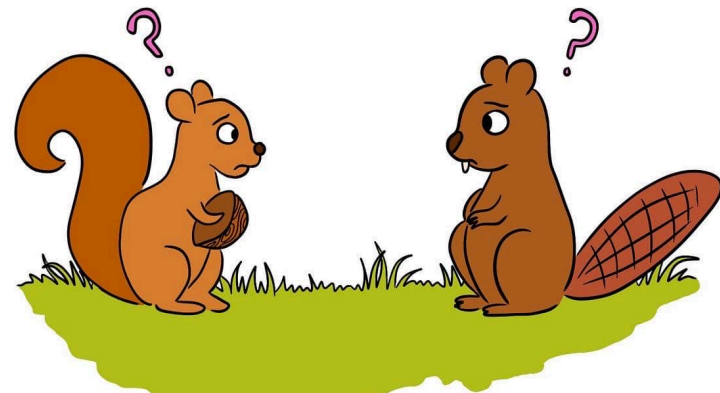


Ongoing Work

- Stakeholder trust remains central to successful implementation.
- Constructive dialogue, sites visits and broader workshop participation have supported this aim, though polarised debate and stakeholder attendance continue to present challenges.

Whose fault
is it?

Who is responsible
for fixing it?





Conclusions

- There is a need to think about how ‘renewed coexistence’ can support resilience in the landscape to future climate change.
- Beavers can be part of the solutions to our larger landscape challenges like river meandering, slowing the flow of water for natural flood management, drought resilience and wildfire prevention.
- However, we need to help those currently struggling with co-existence to experience those benefits and transition towards greater climate resilience.

