

## Ways to complete the Biodiversity Audit

Farmers and crofters will be able to create their whole farm/croft Habitat Map in one of the following ways:

- Use the new NatureScot Farm Biodiversity Scotland digital tool
- Online, create an online habitat case using Map Viewer on RP&S and capture your habitats and features digitally
- Submit habitat maps generated on your own mapping system (including shapefiles) using the RP&S Map Viewer
- Provide a map and key of habitats and linear features to the Land Mapping Team and they will upload it to LPIS on your behalf. You could do this with a paper map and coloured pencils.
- Provide the Land Mapping Team with a list of Land Parcel Identification numbers and the habitat that best describes most of the land cover for each field/land parcel (only appropriate if a field/land parcel has a single habitat present and no boundary or linear features).



### WFP PLANS AND AUDITS

- SOIL
- CARBON
- BIODIVERSITY
- ANIMAL HEALTH & WELFARE
- INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

## Planning 4 Change

# Measuring Biodiversity for Whole Farm Planning

From May 2025, new requirements for the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) mean that regular biodiversity audits will be required as part of the Whole Farm Plan (WFP). All farmers and crofters with permanent land should conduct a biodiversity audit by 2028 and update it every 5 years.

## Contacts

### Soil Association advice and support

Contact our Farming and Land Use Team: 0131 370 8150

Email: [contact@soilassociation.org](mailto:contact@soilassociation.org)

Find out more at [Planning for Change: A Whole Farm Approach](#)

Full scheme guidance: [Whole Farm Plan full guidance](#)

Funding for this programme is being made available through the Knowledge Transfer and Innovation Fund (KTIF), which is funded by the Scottish Government.



## Why measure biodiversity?

Monitoring biodiversity can help farmers and land managers plan how to protect, manage and enhance nature on their land providing benefits for nature and the business. Habitat mapping can provide a baseline of the habitats and linear features on a farm or croft and inform decision making around management options going forward.



## Benefits of improving biodiversity on farm

Biodiversity is vital to a well-functioning farm ecology; contributing to soil formation, pollination, water management, pest and disease control and resilience in the face of climate change. Due to this wide range of functions biodiversity can also be seen as directly contributing to a farm's financial resilience, as well as farmers' wellbeing. The agroecosystem of the farm as a whole benefits from biodiversity; having a more biologically active soil creates healthier plants which are less likely to be susceptible to pests and diseases, more forage for pollinators and other beneficial insects will increase the predators for pests and a wider range of plants in your pasture will provide more nutrients to your livestock, improving their health and welfare and reducing input costs.

**Biodiversity is the gateway to farm resilience. Improving biodiversity is a humbling experience as well as a sure way to reduce the cost of farm inputs.**

Philipp Grunewald,  
Upper Ballaird Farm Coop



Habitat maps apply to all land that you manage on a permanent basis

## Agroforestry for biodiversity and resilience

The careful integration of trees and hedges into your farming system can provide vital habitat for wildlife, natural pest predators and increase biodiversity, but it can also provide shade, shelter and forage for livestock, regulate growing conditions for crops, manage water movement throughout the farm, prevent soil erosion as well as building soil fertility and storing carbon.

The two main types of agroforestry are Silvo-pastoral, which involves grazing animals under trees; and Silvo-arable, where crops are grown beneath trees, often in rows which are large enough for a tractor to pass.

**For more information about agroforestry head to [Agroforestry](#) | [Soil Association](#)**

**And for Scotland-specific information: [Agroforestry resources](#) | [Soil Association](#)**



Full guidance can be found online at:  
[www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/whole-farm-plan](http://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/whole-farm-plan)

The Whole Farm Plan Biodiversity Audit requires farmers and crofters to identify the main habitats and linear features in each land parcel from a list of around 30 individual habitats and linear features from the following broad categories:

- **Cropped land**
- **Grassland**
- **Wetland**
- **Woodland**
- **Coastal**
- **Upland and peatland**
- **Designated/historic sites**
- **Linear features**
- **Point habitats.**

The full list of required habitats and linear features is shown in the Annex of the Whole Farm Plan full guidance:  
<https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/all-schemes/whole-farm-plan/>