



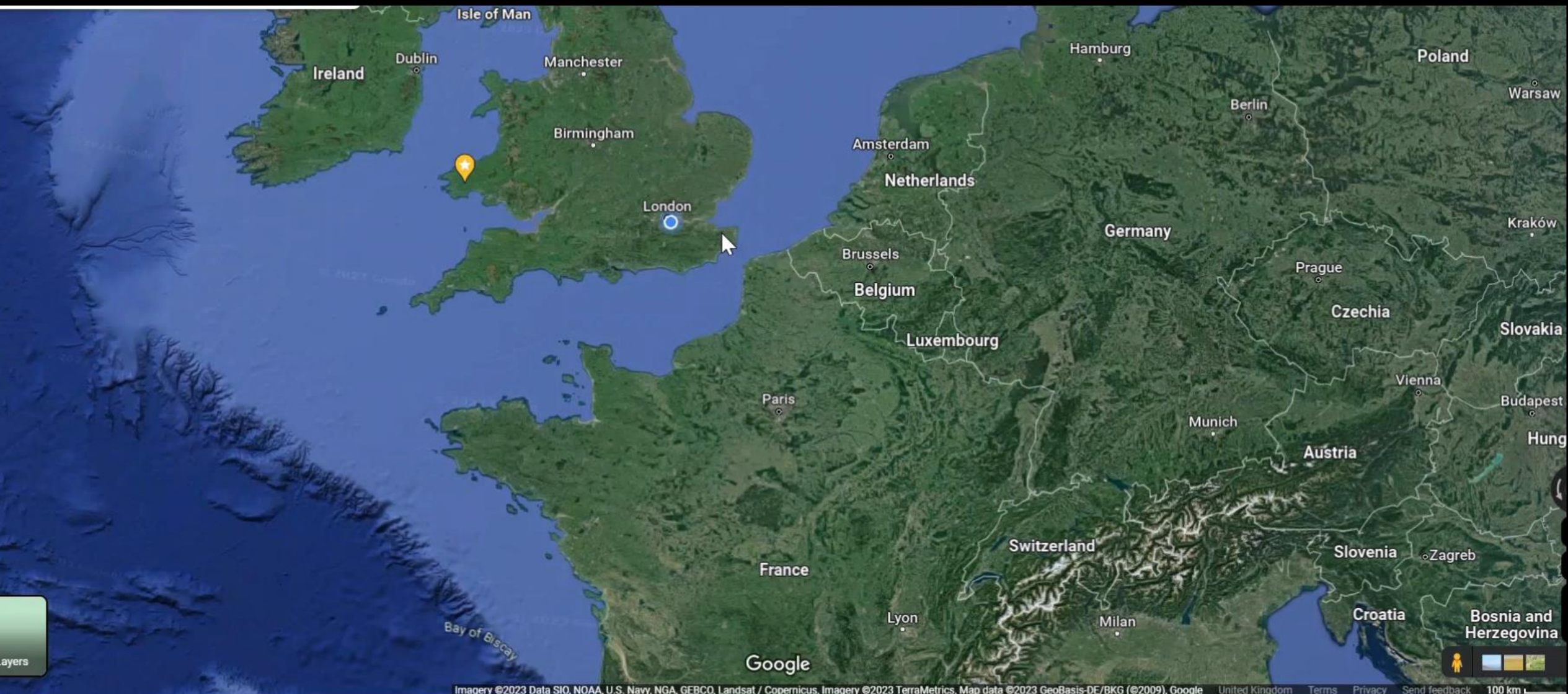
Wilder Blean

Elysia B. Davies
Kent Wildlife Trust





Donovan White



ayers

The Winding Road to Wilding

1949 – National Parks & NNRs declared

2005 'Nature deficit disorder' coined as a term

2010 Lawton Review

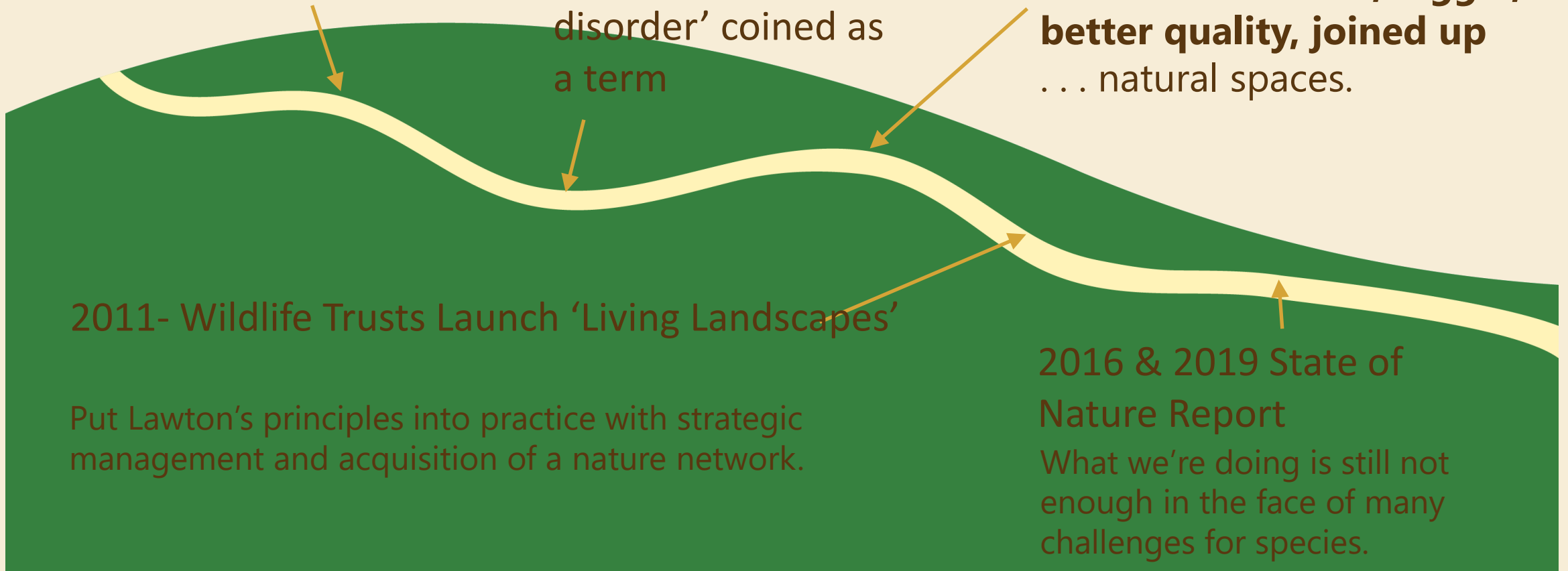
Called for . . . **more, bigger, better quality, joined up** . . . natural spaces.

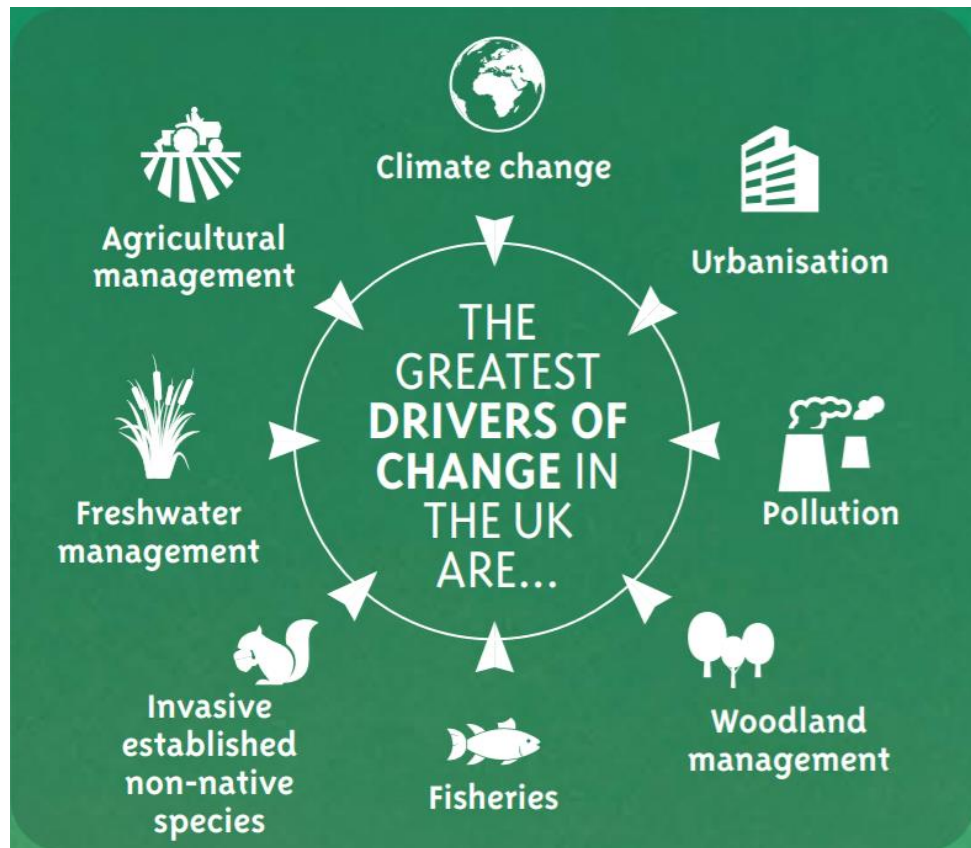
2011- Wildlife Trusts Launch 'Living Landscapes'

Put Lawton's principles into practice with strategic management and acquisition of a nature network.

2016 & 2019 State of Nature Report

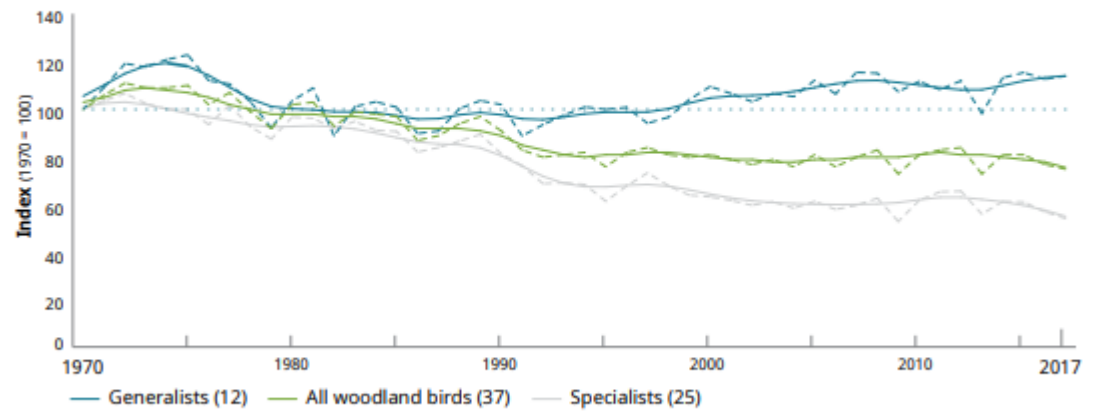
What we're doing is still not enough in the face of many challenges for species.





Breeding woodland birds in the UK, 1970 to 2017

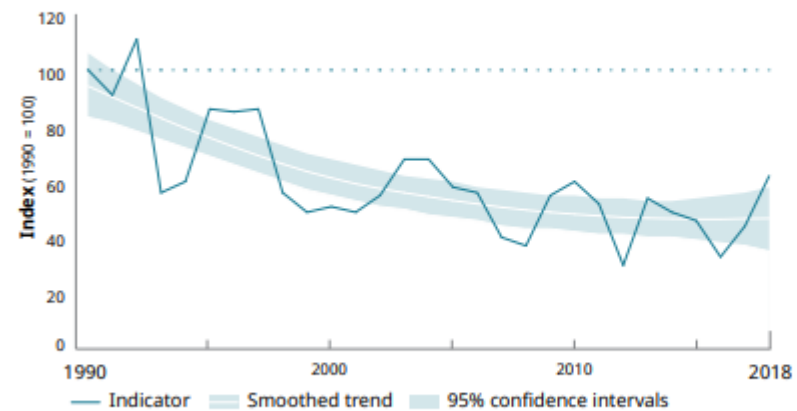
Abundance indicator



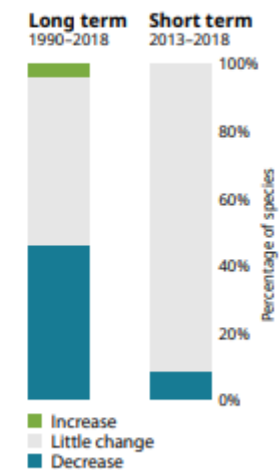
Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/wild-bird-populations-in-the-uk>

UK Biodiversity Indicator: Change in widespread butterflies in woodland in the UK, 1990 to 2018

Abundance indicator (24 species)



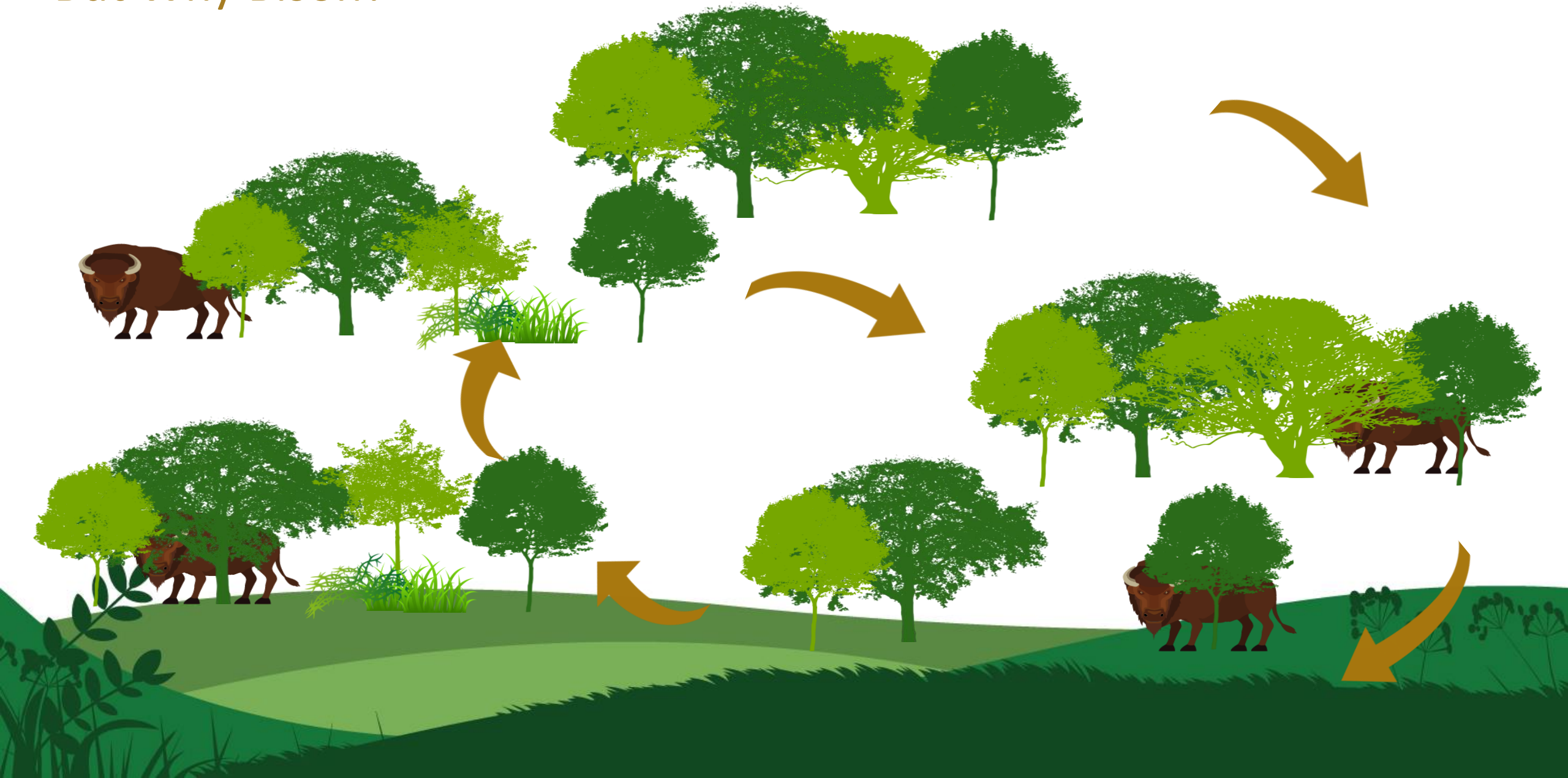
Source: jncc.gov.uk/ukbi-C6



Woodland Management



But Why Bison?



Are we meeting our objectives?



1

Large herbivore assemblage reintroduced to woodland as natural engineers.

2

A more biodiverse, resilient ecosystem.

3

People at all levels are involved for the project.

4

Create model for the rest of the world, based on international best practice.



Donovan White

TRAILS

- Wild Art Trail** ⑥
1.3 km (25 minutes)
- Radfall Route**
3.2 km (45 minutes)
- Wilder Blean Walkabout**
10.1 km (2.5 hours)
- Cycle trail**
- Public footpaths**
- Permissive footpaths**

MAP KEY

- Heather Corrie Ranger Station
- Wheelchair accessible
- Bison viewing point
- Information
- Parking
- Bus stop
- Bison tunnel
- Bison fence
- Woodland boundary
- Ponds



The woodland will become wilder over time. Please keep coming back to see how it transforms as nature takes charge.







Experimental Approach

Bison assemblage

- European bison
- Exmoor ponies
- Iron Age Pigs
- 208ha compartment



Proxy assemblage

- Longhorn cattle
- Exmoor ponies
- Iron Age Pigs
- 244ha compartment



No grazing

- 117ha compartment



Ecological Monitoring

Habitat structure and
vegetation dynamics

What is happening
to the structures
and plant
communities on
site?

Biodiversity and
bioabundance

How rich is the
amount of life on
site, both numbers
of species and size
of populations

Natural processes

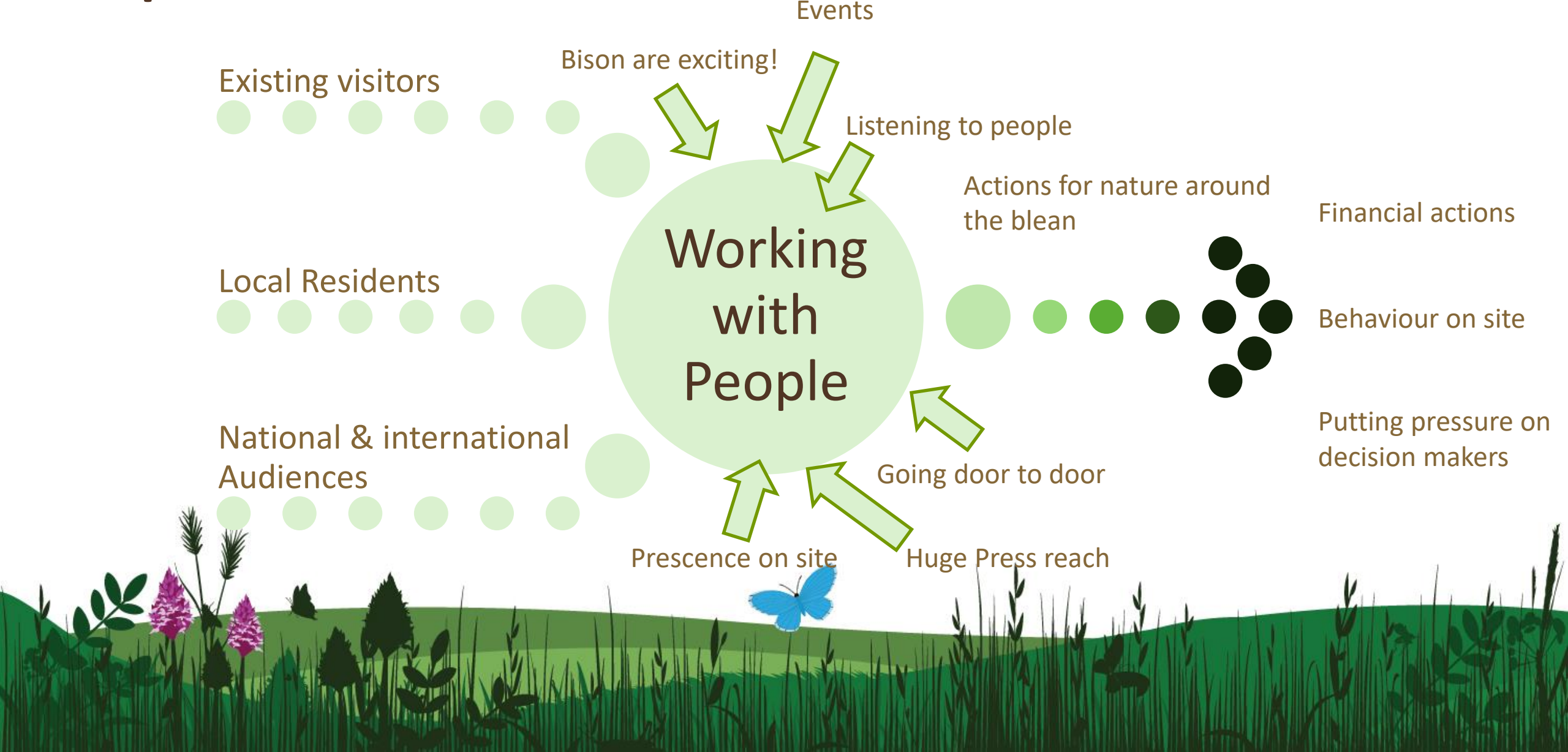
Is the system
functioning better?

Ecosystem services and
natural capital

Is this functioning
system providing us
with things we
need?



People & The Blean



What comes next?

Bigger, Better, More joined up



A close-up profile of a young brown elk or reindeer with a blue eye, standing next to an adult. The young animal has thick, brown fur and a small, dark nose. The adult's leg and lower body are visible in the background, also covered in brown fur. The background is a blurred, natural setting.

Thank you

Donovan White