

Investment in nature can provide a short-term boost in employment, create a more resilient economy as part of a green economic recovery from covid-19, and help us to face the nature and climate crises.

This compendium of shovel-ready projects shows the scale of opportunity. The 330 projects across England can create around **5,000 FTE jobs in the environment sector, 5,000 FTE jobs in delivery, plus supply chain benefits**, and deliver a significant boost towards Government nature and climate targets, including:

- **Creating or enhancing at least 200,000ha of priority habitat**, including woodland, scrub, heaths, bogland, peatland, grassland, hedgerows, marshes, wetlands, streams, rivers, marine and coastal habitats. This would deliver two fifths of the 500,000ha 25 year plan priority habitat target in just a few years
- **Planting at least 4.5 million trees, helping to meet UK targets** to plant 30,000 new hectares of woodland every year, and capturing around 3 million tonnes of CO2
- The projects would **capture a minimum of 100,000 tonnes of CO2 p.a. initially, rising significantly over time**. Early investment in these nature-based solutions is essential to delivering the carbon capture levels of matured habitats and trees to meet the Government 2050 net zero targets
- **Hundreds of at risk UK plant, animal and fungi species would be protected** and their numbers increased through these projects, from seahorses to hedgehogs, to bats and rare birds. Vulnerable and declining habitats would be restored



£315m investment delivers:



In addition to achieving these headline benefits, these projects would also deliver a raft of nature-based solutions which help towards Government targets.

- Whole communities would be **better protected against flooding**
- Improved green spaces would **benefit the health and well-being of hundreds of thousands of people** through increased access and exercise opportunities
- Air, water and soil quality, noise levels, pollution levels, flooding, SSSIs, coastal protection and fish stocks would all be improved in multiple areas across England



Green investment generates jobs and saves money, in addition to tackling our nature, climate and public health crises. Nature-based solutions provide powerful and cost-effective remedies for issues such as flooding, drought, soil degradation, air and water pollution, obesity and mental health problems.

The National Forest tree planting project (1991-2010), set-up by the Conservative Government of the time, received £89 million in public funding and delivered combined benefits of around £228m. This public investment generated a near threefold return and the projects we are proposing are likely to yield even greater dividends.

Some of the shovel-ready projects proposed here have already been able to provide clear indications of quantified benefits. At a cost of £34m these 23 projects are estimated to produce at least £160m in environmental and public benefits including flooding protection, carbon sequestration and improved health. That's more than 4.5 times the project cost in ecosystem benefits alone, in addition to millions of pounds they will pump directly into the economy, with the vast majority of project costs being outlaid on contractors and materials.