



# Atmospheric nitrogen deposition

## Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 Sites Theme Workshop Note

### Introduction

Nitrogen deposition has been recognised in the 2013 Article 17 reporting process as one of the main pressures to a wide range of European habitats, putting the condition of a large proportion of sites at risk. This also has implications for Biodiversity 2020 targets. A work programme is being established to look at potential remedies for designated sites.

An internal technical workshop was held in Cambridge on 30 August 2013 on the topic of nitrogen deposition and Natura 2000 in England. The aim of this workshop was to:

- Develop a strategic approach to nitrogen deposition on Natura 2000 sites, taking account of project underway and timeframes.
- Discuss the potential content of the IPENS theme plan on nitrogen deposition.
- Discuss how the IPENS Site Improvement Plans can build on, and contribute to, the work underway on nitrogen deposition. What can the plans say about nitrogen measures, given the various timeframes?

The Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 Sites (IPENS) has hosted a series of workshops with key stakeholders in order to gather views and ideas on how to resolve some of the issues affecting Natura 2000 sites. The views in this note are those of the workshop participants and do not necessarily represent those of Natural England or the Environment Agency.



## Key messages from the workshop

- IPENS Site Improvement Plans need to mention nitrogen deposition as an issue for sites where the critical load is exceeded. Identify as 'risk' when features are in favourable condition.
- A new mechanism needs to be developed to deal with nitrogen impacts: Site Nitrogen Action Plan. IPENS Site Improvement Plans will mention this mechanism to deliver the necessary local nitrogen measures, with a shorter deadline when there is more certainty of nitrogen impacts.
- The IPENS theme plan should include guidance on how to develop a Site Nitrogen Action Plan.
- The group identified a number of critical dependencies between the IPENS work on nitrogen deposition and the other projects.
- In addition to local action, a national Nitrogen Emission Plan, to tackle background deposition, would be beneficial.

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## Envisaged next steps

- Develop guidance on how to deal with potential nitrogen impacts in draft Site improvement Plans (done).
  - Secure wider engagement with the results of the workshop through the development of a Theme Plan.
  - Develop a Theme Plan on nitrogen deposition and Natura 2000 in England setting out an integrated strategic approach and the need for a new local mechanism.
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# Workshop participants

The following organisations and Natural England staff participated in the workshop:

Senior Adviser, IPENS	Natural England
Senior Specialist, Air Pollution	Natural England
Lead Adviser, Land Use	Natural England
Principal Specialist, Land Use	Natural England
IPENS Programme Coordinator	Natural England
	JNCC

Image: Hare's-tail cotton grass on Hatfield Moor SAC/Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA  
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