

Natural Capital Atlases: Mapping Indicators for County and City Regions

Second edition
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Further information

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Foreword

Natural England commission a range of reports from external contractors to provide evidence and advice to assist us in delivering our duties. The views in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of Natural England.

Background

Enhancing the state of the environment is essential for both people and planet. This is because our wellbeing and prosperity relies on the benefits that we get from nature. The 25 Year Environment Plan aims to improve the state of the environment within a generation; we need to create resilient ecosystems where both people and planet are able to thrive.

Understanding the state of our natural environment is the essential first step to improving it. Natural England's Natural Capital Indicators^[1] are designed to inform our understanding of the state of our natural assets. These indicators measure the quantity, quality and location of ecosystems, and the flow of ecosystem services from them. The indicators highlight which properties of the environment are important for delivering which ecosystem services and benefits. Understanding the state of natural capital is essential to enable the sustainable provision of multiple benefits, now and into the future.

These Natural Capital Atlases follow on from the National Natural Capital Atlas^[2]. The best available and nationally consistent evidence is used to map out indicators showing asset quality, quantity and location. Indicators for some flows of ecosystem services are also mapped.

These atlases provide an “off the shelf” natural capital evidence base for each place. They can be added to and built on. They have a wide variety of uses with more information in the “How to start using your atlas” annex. The data package can be downloaded enabling users to explore the data layers in more detail.

The second editions of the Natural Capital Atlases: Mapping Indicators for County and City Regions have been updated to include some clarification notes at relevant points through the document regarding catchment services. These are services which are associated with freshwater but are provided by the land across the wider catchment: water supply,

¹ Lusardi, J., Rice, P., Waters, R.D., and Craven, J. (2018) *Natural Capital Indicators: for defining and measuring change in natural capital*. Natural England Research Report, Number 076.

² Wigley, S., Paling, N., Rice, P., Lord, A., and Lusardi, J. (2021) *National Natural Capital Atlas*. Natural England Commissioned Report Number 285. Second edition. Natural England.

regulation of water quality and flood protection. There have also been some minor alterations to supporting text and images through the documents. However, it should be noted that all the maps, and therefore the underlying geospatial data, have not been updated.