

PRESS RELEASE

Wednesday 22nd May 2024 – for immediate release

ESA publishes updated biodiversity best practice guide for waste sector

To align with the *International Day for Biological Diversity*, the Environmental Services Association (ESA) has today (Wednesday 22nd May 2024) published an update to its biodiversity best practice guidance for recycling and waste management operators – helping the industry to understand, measure and mitigate its impact on nature.

The guide, first published in 2022, was compiled by members of the ESA's Biodiversity Working Group and curates relevant policy, legislation and reporting/assessment tools, as well as an up-to-date sample of real-world case studies from ESA members, to help organisations across the resources and waste management sector consider and report their impacts upon biodiversity – both positive and negative.

It has today been updated to reflect new commitments and legislation arising since 2022, at both a national and international level, to protect biodiversity. This includes the Global Biodiversity Framework, implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain planning conditions as part of the Environment Act 2021, and the Environment Improvement Plan 2023.

The guide now also includes details of published reporting tools and frameworks including the Taskforce for Nature-Related Financial Disclosures, International Sustainability Standards Board, and the ESA's own Nature Positive Toolkit published in 2023.

The **International Day for Biological Diversity**, which takes place on May 22nd each year, commemorates the adoption of the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** on 22 May 1992 and aims to increase support for the Convention, its Protocols and related action frameworks.

This year, the theme of the International Day for Biological Diversity is **"Be part of the Plan"**. This is a call to action to encourage governments, communities, businesses and individuals to highlight the ways in which they are supporting efforts to protect, restore and enhance nature – highlighting action being taken in the lead-up to **the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 16)**, to be held in Colombia from 21 October to 1 November 2024.

Chair of the Biodiversity Working Group, Leigh Broadhurst, said: "With the theme for International Day for Biological Diversity being *'be part of the Plan'*, we recognise the waste industry has a proactive role to play in addressing the ecological crisis and supporting the goals of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Since we first published the Best Practice Guide in December 2022 there have been further commitments and legislation introduced both nationally and internationally to protect biodiversity. We have updated the guide to ensure it reflects the current landscape so it



BE PART OF THE PLAN

International Day
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can serve as a helpful reference for organisations across our sector to plan, monitor and deliver biodiversity improvements and interventions through their operations and supply chains. “

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Notes to editors:

A. A copy of the updated *Best Practice Guide: Biodiversity and the resources and waste management industry* is appended to this press release and can be accessed for free from www.esauk.org

B. The Environmental Services Association (ESA) is the trade association representing the UK’s recycling and waste management industry. Our members are directly delivering the UK’s transformation to a more circular economy and are leading the sector’s efforts to decarbonise recycling and waste management operations and address the world’s ecological crises.

The ESA works with government, regulators and the public to deliver sustainable and high-performing waste and resource management solutions for the UK. Our strategic priorities are to set high operational standards for the sector; to deliver more recycling and focus on up-stream interventions to eliminate waste; and to decarbonise our sector by 2040. For further details please visit www.esauk.org

C. According to the **United Nations**, extracting and processing raw materials to meet global consumption accounts for 90% of biodiversity loss. Recycling helps to keep valuable materials in use for longer, which reduces the need to extract and process more.

Using recycled materials also mitigates the carbon emissions associated with the extraction and processing of raw materials – helping to slow climate change and its negative impact upon biodiversity. Additionally, waste management practices and regulations help to minimise pollution, which would otherwise threaten biodiversity.

However, in addition to these positive impacts arising from the sector’s fundamental activities, operators can widen their influence through a range of interventions to restore, protect and enhance biodiversity – for example, through sensitive planning and delivery of construction projects or by creating and maintaining habitats on estate holdings. Additionally, accurate monitoring and reporting on biodiversity impacts helps to ensure effective governance and drive performance.

Media contact

ESA Press Office: 020 7591 3214

Email: b-johnson@esauk.org