

Northern Ireland's Geodiversity Charter *Action Plan* *2017–2020*



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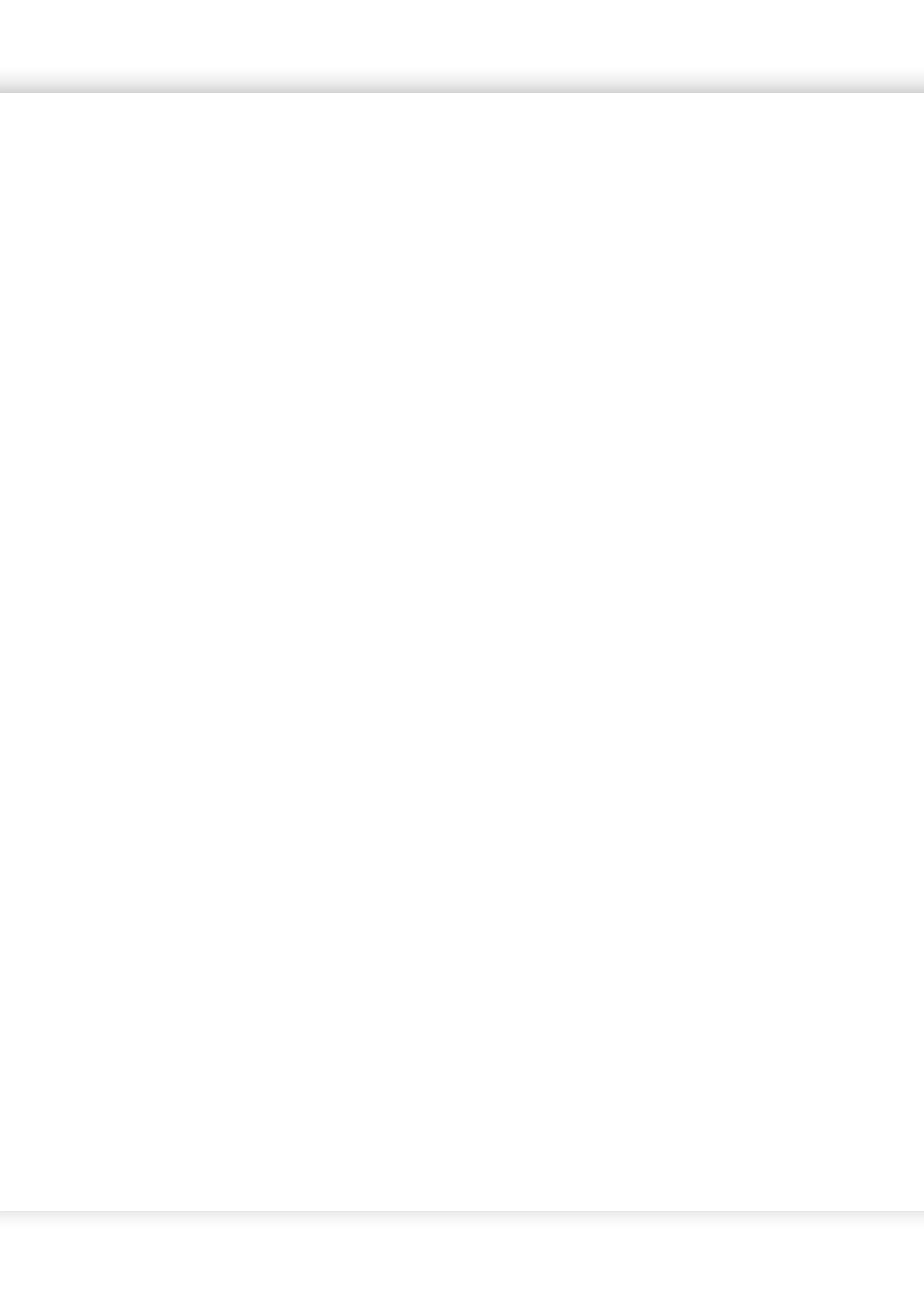
Geological
Survey of
Northern
Ireland

Celebrating 70 years: 1947–2017



**British
Geological Survey**

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH COUNCIL



Northern Ireland Geodiversity Charter Action Plan

The Northern Ireland Geodiversity Charter recognises that geodiversity is an integral and vital part of our environment, economy, heritage and future sustainable development. It is necessary that our geodiversity is safeguarded and managed appropriately for current and future generations.

To maintain and enhance our geodiversity it is important to recognise its role in:

- Our understanding on Northern Ireland's geological history;
- Natural heritage, both terrestrial and marine, and valued landscapes;
- Sustainable economic development;
- Supporting habitats and species and the many essential benefits it provides for society;
- Adaptation to climate change through sustainable management of land and water by working with natural processes on a landscape scale;
- Historical and cultural development of our society;
- Public health, quality of life, and well-being, connecting people with the natural environment;
- Active promotion of geological tourism.

To achieve this vision, future action should address four main areas of activity:

- **Raising awareness:** raising awareness of the value and importance of geodiversity and its wider links with the natural and built environment, cultural heritage and sense of place, encouraging a sense of pride through education and promotion at all levels.
- **Policy integration:** Integrating geodiversity into relevant policies, guidance and advice to ensure a sustainable and integrated approach to management of natural heritage for the wider benefit of Northern Ireland's people, environment and economy.
- **Conservation:** Encourage conservation, enhancement and careful management of our geological heritage and continue to develop and share good geoconservation practice.
- **Research:** Continue to support research that improves our understanding of geodiversity and its role in providing benefits to ecosystems and people, as well as addressing key knowledge gaps leading to better decision making about the natural environment.

How to use the Northern Ireland Geodiversity Charter Action Plan?

The Northern Ireland Geodiversity Charter Action Plan (NIGCAO) objectives and aims have been allocated to one of six target sectors. These include individuals and communities, landowners and managers of NGOs, the industry and business sector, local authorities and public agencies, education and research. The NIGCAP should be read in conjunction with the Northern Ireland Geodiversity Charter.

The NIGCAP is presented as a summary document and does not show all of the activities that are taking place or list any of the partners that are delivering against objectives and actions but suggests areas where activities could contribute to the NIGCAP.

Sector 1: Individuals and communities	
Objective	Actions
Experience and enjoy your local landscape and geodiversity and appreciate its value and importance.	Visit and explore Northern Ireland's geodiversity to develop an appreciation and sense of ownership.
	Behave responsibly and sustainably towards your natural environment, adhering to the relevant guidance and codes.
	Act as an ambassador for your local geodiversity, and work with others to celebrate, conserve and promote it.
Indicator 1: The total number of people actively involved in geodiversity initiatives as individuals or community groups	
Indicator 2: The number of geodiversity events organised by members of local community groups	

Sector 2: Landowners and managers of NGOs	
Objective	Actions
Take into account the geodiversity of the land that you manage, try to work in sympathy with the natural processes and landforms and consider how the geodiversity can be appreciated and understood.	As far as possible, work with the natural processes on your land.
	Maintain the geodiversity of your land by seeking information and advice to help you understand what is there and what you can to conserve and enhance it.
	Help local communities, schools and businesses to appreciate the connections between geodiversity, land use, history, archaeology and biodiversity by encouraging safe and responsible access to local sites.
	Incorporate and advocate geodiversity in your existing nature conservation activities and policies.
Indicator 3: Conservation advice	
Total number of landowners and NGOs seeking advice for conserving and enhancing geodiversity.	
Indicator 4: Safe and responsible access	
Total number of projects established to encourage safe and responsible access to local sites.	
Indicator 5: Geodiversity activities and policies	
Total number of activities and policies that incorporate geodiversity by landowners and managers of NGOs.	

Sector 3: Industry and business sector	
Objective	Actions
Endeavour to ensure that new industry and business opportunities take geodiversity into consideration and strive to meet best practice standards.	Develop sustainable business opportunities based on geodiversity, including tourism, accommodation, guiding and local products.
	Work with natural processes as far as possible and consider the future impact of natural processes when planning new developments.
	Support efforts to encourage public awareness and enjoyment of geodiversity.
	Facilitate access to geoheritage features, including temporary exposures, and make available records and samples as part of local and national geological record keeping.

Indicator 6: Geodiversity design

Total number of developments and business opportunities where geodiversity has been recognised within the design.

Indicator 7: Geodiversity collections

Total number of geodiversity collections available to view by geoscientists and the public.

Sector 4: Local authorities and public agencies	
Objective	Actions
Ensure that due consideration, management, enhancement and promotion of geodiversity are in integral part of decision making and support action by local communities to achieve this.	Acknowledge the value and importance of geodiversity in policy and guidance documents at a national and local level and seek advice from appropriate expert bodies in decision making where appropriate.
	Promote Northern Ireland's geodiversity as a tourism asset that adds value to visitor experience and enjoyment.
	Provide information for schools and the public, making known the importance of geodiversity sites on a local and national scale.

Indicator 8: Policies, plans and strategy documents**Indicator 9: Geodiversity tourism**

Total number of people visiting a selection of geodiversity sites for tourism purposes.

Indicator 10: Geodiversity interpretation

Total number of new interpretation panels produced that include an element of geodiversity.

Sector 5: Education	
Objective	Actions
Share and promote the values and applications of Northern Ireland's geodiversity through teaching at all levels.	Inspire teachers and students at all levels about Northern Ireland's geodiversity and the links with biodiversity, our cultural and built heritage, and the economy.
	Include geodiversity as a part of the wider STEM-agenda within schools.
	Raise awareness of geodiversity at a senior government level to allow for a better understanding of its wider values and applications.
	Provide information for the public on the wider values of geodiversity at key visitor locations.

Indicator 11: Recognition within formal education

Total number of students sitting GCSE and / or AS/A2 level geology.

Indicator 12: Geodiversity in lesson plans

Total number of primary and post-primary schools that regularly include an element of geodiversity within their lesson plans.

Indicator 13: Government official awareness

Total number of awareness raising events for senior government officials.

Sector 6: Academia and research	
Objective	Actions
Continue to develop the geodiversity knowledge framework of Northern Ireland including its wider values and applications.	Share research evidence to demonstrate the wider benefits, values and applications of geodiversity.
	Develop the scientific framework of geodiversity and identify and address key knowledge gaps, including the applications and wider significance of geodiversity.
	Improve access to and encourage better use of existing information and data.

Indicator 14: Recognition within research papers

Total number of peer-reviewed research papers relating to Northern Ireland's geodiversity.

Indicator 15: Recognition within research projects

Total number of research projects undertaken that include Northern Ireland's geodiversity and its wider significance.

