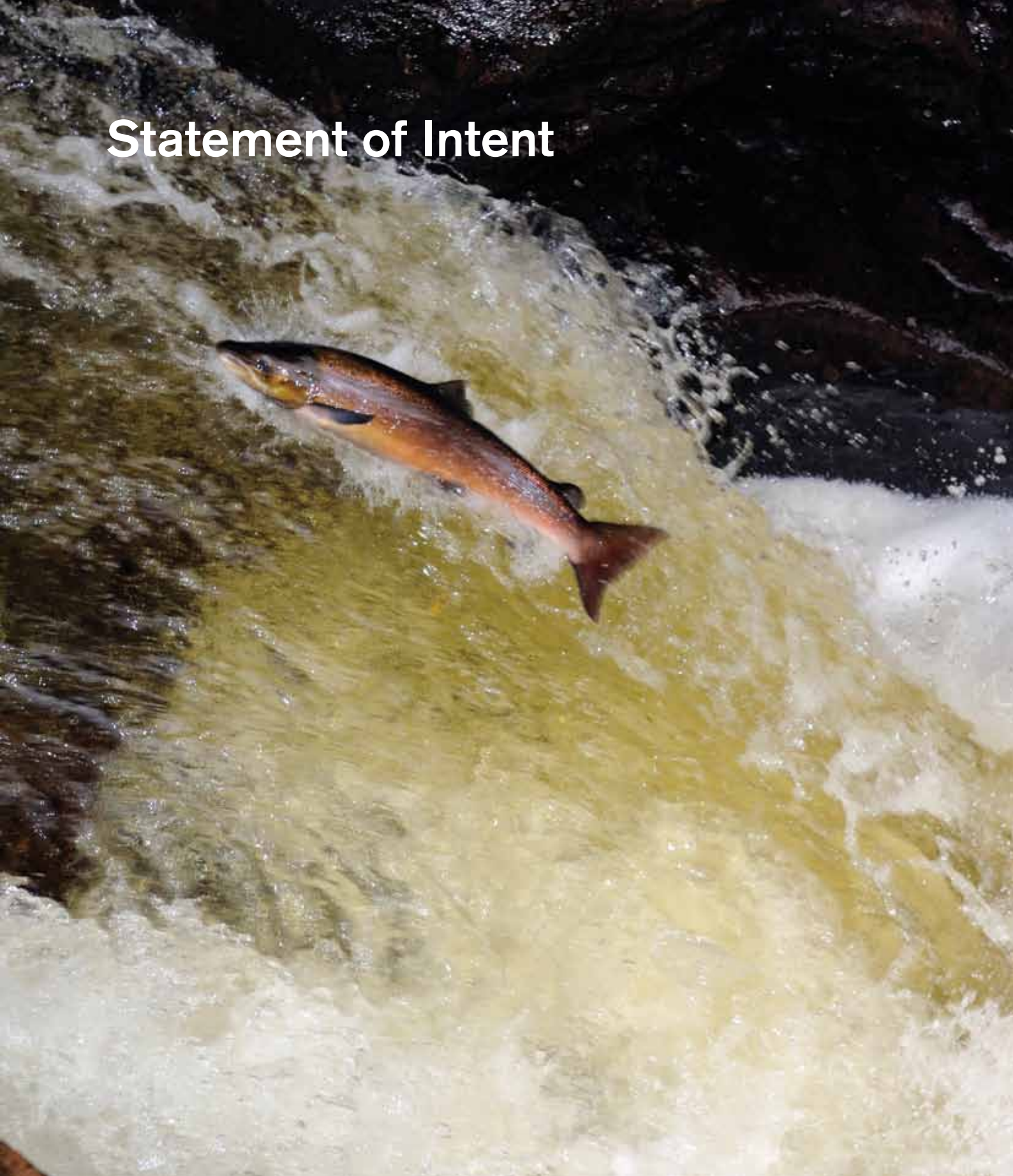


Statement of Intent



Scottish Natural Heritage
Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba

All of nature for all of Scotland
Nàdar air fad airson Alba air fad

RAFTS

The logo for RAFTS, featuring a stylized blue infinity symbol above the word "RAFTS" in a serif font.



Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) and the Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland (RAFTS) enjoy a good and constructive working relationship, and share many common objectives for the better management of aquatic environments and fisheries and the conservation of native fish species. Since 2005 we have worked together on a wide range of projects. We recognise other organisations also contribute to the management of our freshwaters and their fisheries, but we have a particular joint interest in the conservation of Scotland's rivers and lochs, and promoting their sustainable use.

This joint statement re-affirms each organisation's appreciation of the other's interests, recognises the benefits of the public and private sectors forming strong and effective partnerships and describes arrangements for future liaison and co-operation.

Scottish Natural Heritage

SNH, established by Parliament in 1992, is the Scottish Government's statutory body responsible for promoting the conservation, enhancement, understanding, enjoyment and sustainable use of Scotland's natural heritage – the wildlife, habitats and landscapes which have evolved in Scotland through the long partnership between people and nature. It acts as statutory adviser to government, undertakes projects, and provides advice and funding to others contributing to these objectives.

SNH is continuing to develop a greater focus on wildlife management, as part of a broader approach to securing healthy ecosystems through the sustainable use of the resources and services they provide. In this respect, SNH aims to secure the sustainable management of Scotland's wildlife in order to deliver what is best for Scotland's people, economy and environment.

Four activities are important for this:

- Promoting the conservation and management of populations of native fish, other aquatic species and their habitats;
- Working more closely with catchment and fishery managers to build relationships founded on trust and mutual respect for each other's knowledge and experience;
- Raising understanding of how high quality rivers and lochs and their effective management contribute to ecosystem services; and
- Developing common objectives for aquatic species and habitats so that integrated catchment management can help balance these.

Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland

The Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland (RAFTS), is an independent charity, established in 2005. RAFTS' core objective is to conserve and enhance Scottish freshwater habitats and their native freshwater fish species. RAFTS works closely with its membership of 25 independent rivers and fisheries trusts and a wide range of other partners to achieve this goal.

The work of RAFTS and its members is largely funded through the development of national, regional and local scale projects, through subscriptions and donations from the membership and by sponsors within the private sector. Specific activities are funded by grants from Government and Government agencies (including SNH). RAFTS employs 13 coordinating, management and project staff, and represents approximately 60 biologists and managers working within the network of member trusts. RAFTS conveys the views of its members, to the scientific community, the wider public, politicians and Government bodies (including SNH).

RAFTS and its members are now well placed to promote best practice in catchment, fish, fisheries and native and invasive species management. RAFTS and its members also deliver a wide range of research, monitoring and practical conservation projects. These activities support the sustainable management of rivers, lochs and other habitats that help to support the rural economy, natural heritage and biodiversity of Scotland.



In working together:

RAFTS recognises and supports the statutory role of SNH in the conservation, management, enjoyment and enhancement of Scotland's diverse range of wildlife, habitats and landscapes.

SNH recognises the role that RAFTS plays in promoting good practice and in the delivery of effective catchment and fisheries management. SNH also recognises that RAFTS' research, advice and capacity to coordinate and deliver projects plays an important role in securing the future of Scotland's rivers and lochs.

Both organisations recognise the importance of:

- Research and monitoring programmes which support evidence-based policy in catchment, freshwater and fisheries management and deliver positive benefits for people and biodiversity;

- Working in partnership to develop and implement practical projects that deliver effective conservation and management benefits; and
- Raising awareness and understanding of these benefits amongst Government, policy advisers, catchment and fishery managers, and the public so as to meet a range of practical, social, economic and environmental needs.

Together we shall:

- Find balanced, practical and cost effective solutions to sustain and improve the biodiversity of Scotland's rivers and lochs;
- Promote awareness of and adherence to fisheries, environmental and conservation legislation and codes of practice;
- Develop an evidence-based approach to managing and conserving Scotland's rivers and lochs recognising this can provide adaptation and mitigation measures relevant to climate and other environmental change;

- Raise awareness of the importance of catchment management and sustainable fisheries in delivering benefits to the rural economy;
- Seek to resolve conflicts in the management of species of conservation value;
- Recognise and promote public enjoyment and understanding of rivers, lochs and the wider countryside;
- Strive to improve the connections between people and Scotland's freshwaters by raising public awareness of catchment management issues, fisheries and wildlife management practices and the environmental, social and economic benefits they provide;
- Seek opportunities to work together in emerging areas such as sustainable flood management, coastal and marine issues and citizen science; and
- Promote good practice in animal husbandry and welfare within fisheries.

These objectives will be achieved by:

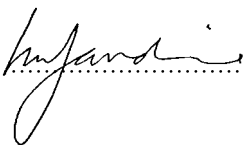
- Reviewing and improving the way we work together to maximise the long-term benefits;
- Sharing specialist knowledge and experience in collaborating over conservation and management of protected areas;
- Contributing to the delivery of the objectives of the Strategic Framework for Scottish Freshwater Fisheries;
- Identifying the constraints and opportunities relating to conservation conflicts which can be used to develop adaptive management plans;
- Undertaking jointly-funded monitoring and research projects and agreeing how their findings will be applied and disseminated;
- Continuing to undertake practical demonstration projects which achieve multiple benefits - for example, invasive species management programmes;
- Encouraging fisheries management bodies to take an active role in monitoring their contribution to fish conservation;
- Building capacity within SNH and RAFTS and its members - for example by joint training initiatives, the development of codes of good practice and the dissemination of new advances through Sharing Good Practice or similar events;
- Jointly working to produce publically available information e.g. guidance notes, information booklets and web-based material; and
- Giving early consideration to joint and coordinated work on designated sites; the status of aquatic species of conservation importance and improving habitats for all native freshwater species.

Senior officers from each organisation shall meet at least once a year to review liaison, co-operation and achievements. This shall be supported by a work programme covering collaborative working and reporting of the results. This Statement shall be reviewed at three-yearly intervals, or at other intervals as agreed mutually.

Signed for Rivers and Fisheries Trusts of Scotland
(Registered Charity No: SC031021, Registered Company: SC 370242)



Signed for Scottish Natural Heritage



This day, Thursday 29th March 2012

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