

Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere

Scotland's **First**

Notes for Editors

Note 1. Some Key Facts:

The Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere

- covers an area of 5,269 square kilometers
- is home to 95,000 people.
- includes some 45,000 dwellings
- has 5,000 small and medium businesses
- 8,000 people self employed
- GDP of approximately £2bn
- has 14 Special Areas of Conservation and 4 Special Protection Areas.
- the Core Areas comprise the Cairnmore of Fleet, National Nature Reserve (NNR), the Silver Flowe, NNR and the core of the Merrick Kells, Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Note 2. How many Biospheres are there and where are they?

Galloway and Southern Ayrshire is part of a global network of Biospheres. This worldwide network provides unique opportunities for exchanges of experience and collaborative research. Currently (June 2012) there are some 580 Biospheres world-wide, spread across 114 countries and all chosen to be representative of their region and to be sites in which to explore and demonstrate approaches to conservation and sustainable development.

- Africa: 74 Biospheres in 33 Countries - e.g. Mount Kenya.
- Arab States: 26 Biospheres in 11 Countries - e.g. Dana
- Asia: 107 Biospheres in 28 Countries - e.g. Uluru (Ayers Rock-Mount Olga) and the Great Gobi
- Europe and North America: 261 Biospheres in 33 Countries- e.g. Niagara Escarpment, the Danube Delta, Yellowstone and the Hawaiian Islands.
- Latin America and the Caribbean: 109 Biospheres in 20 Countries - e.g. Central Amazon

Note 3. What are the designation criteria?

UNESCO launched the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme in 1970 and the Biosphere Reserve concept began in 1974. The original criteria for a Biosphere Reserve were primarily about scientific conservation and research and sites were chosen to represent the main ecosystems of the planet. Most UK Biosphere Reserves were designated in 1976 under these criteria.

The designation criteria changed to include the human dimension along with the natural environment after a review in 1995 (resulting in the Seville treaty). Since then, these 'new style' Biosphere Reserves must have three complementary functions:

- Conservation - to preserve genetic resources, species, ecosystems and landscapes;
- Learning and Research - to support research, monitoring, education and information exchange related to local, national and global issues of conservation and development.
- Sustainable Development - to foster sustainable economic and human development;

and have three different management zones:

- Core Area
- Buffer Zone
- Transition Area

In March 2008, DEFRA published a report of research into *"The potential for Biosphere Reserves to achieve UK social, economic and environmental goals"*. It quotes the 2008 Madrid Action Plan, defining Biosphere 'Reserves' as *"sites of excellence to foster harmonious integration of people and nature for sustainable development through participation, knowledge, well-being, cultural values and society's ability to cope with change, thus contributing to the [Millennium Development Goals]* The Madrid Action Plan specifically



www.gallowayandsouthernayrshirebiosphere.org.uk



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere
member of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves

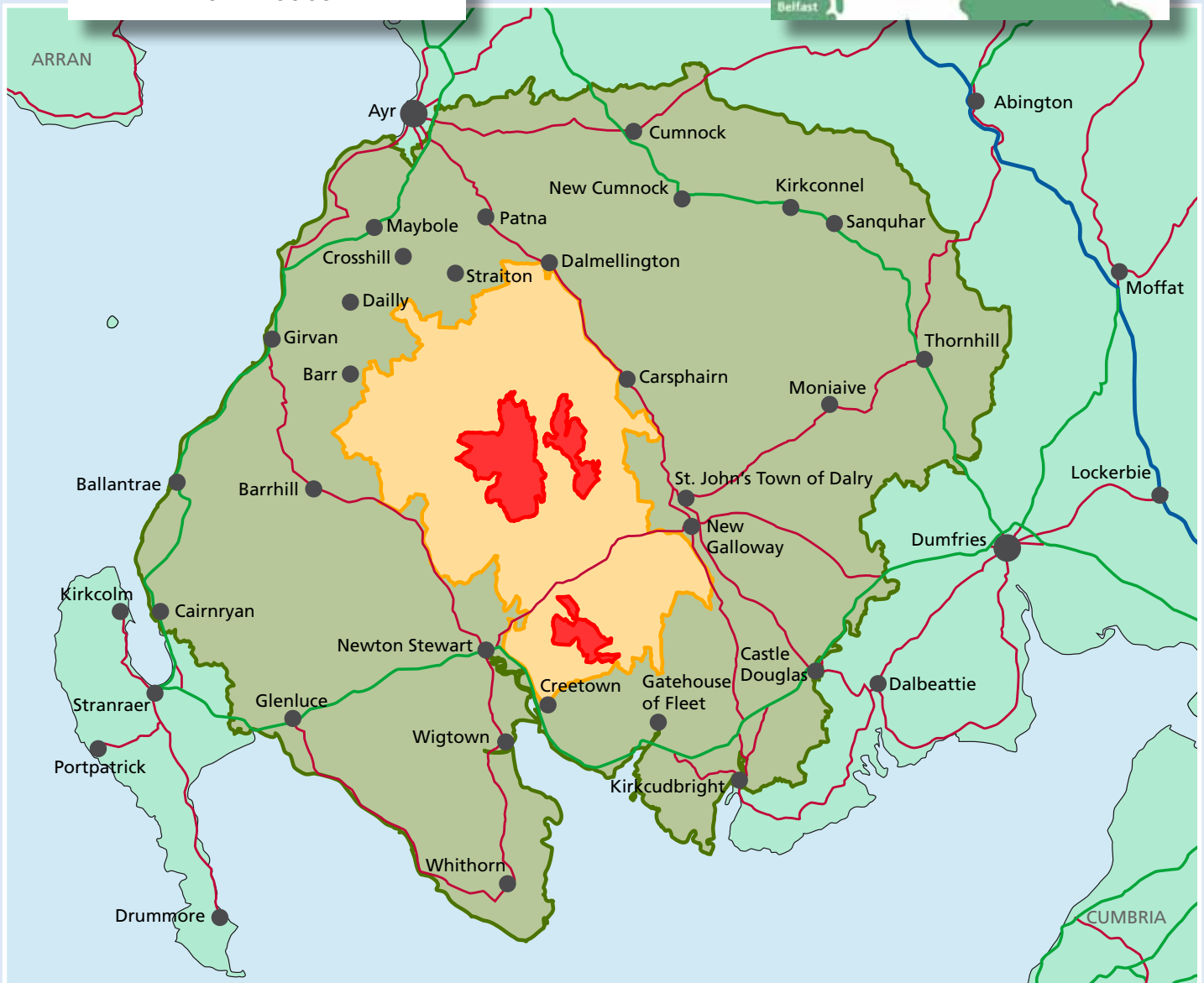
Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere

KEY

Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere Zonation

- Core Areas
- Buffer Zone
- Transition Areas

- Motorway
- Trunk Roads
- Main Roads



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identifies a role for Biospheres in addressing three emerging challenges: climate change; provision of ecosystem services and urbanization as a principal driver for ecosystem-wide pressures.

Note 4. How many Biosphere Reserves are there in the UK currently?

There are three “new style” Biospheres in the UK:

- Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere
- North Devon Biosphere Reserve.
- Dyfi Biosphere

Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere is Scotland’s first Biosphere

Other areas in the UK which have existing old style Biosphere designations:

- Moor House - Upper Teesdale Biosphere Reserve (proposal to withdraw as a Biosphere)
- North Norfolk Coast Biosphere Reserve (initial explorations currently underway)
- Beinn Eighe National Nature Reserve (initial explorations currently underway)
- Loch Druidibeg National Nature Reserve

Note 5. Biosphere Vision and Ambitions:

Vision: “To make life in our Biosphere better while caring for the natural environment”

Key Theme	Ambition
Supporting the Economy	A World Class Place for Growth Creating an environment based on restored ecosystem health which provides opportunities for and underpins sustainable economic growth and where people choose to work, invest and visit.
Enhancing the Quality of Life and Regenerating Communities	A World Class Place to Live Creating an environment based on restored ecosystem health which supports sustainable, healthy lifestyles, good physical and mental wellbeing that people can enjoy, take pride in and where they choose to live and bring up their families.
Responding to Climate Change	A World Class Place for Sustainability Creating an environment, attitudes, behavior and actions which address the causes of and adaptations to climate change based around restoring ecosystem health.
Enriching the Environment	A World Class Place for Nature Creating an environment based on restored ecosystem health where nature can flourish and where people and nature are in a better more productive balance.
Developing awareness, understanding and knowledge	A World Class Place for Learning Creating an environment which people understand, value, take pride in and ownership of, and which others can learn from and share.

The overall Ambition is for Galloway and Southern Ayrshire to be **“A World Class Place for People and Nature”**

Note 6. Biosphere Charter

Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere CHARTER Principles:

Conserve the Natural Resources of the Region

We will support and contribute to the protection, enhancement and restoration of the integrity of natural environments, habitat, species at risk, biodiversity and scenic appeal.

Develop greater benefits from natural resources

We will encourage and support the sustainable development of natural resources and ecosystem products and services reflective of the region.

Develop the Economy in a Sustainable Way

We will collaborate with business, the wider community and other stakeholders to develop a healthy economy, while pursuing best practices of sustainability.

Promote Adaptation to & Mitigation of Climate Change

We will encourage and support attitudes, opportunities, research and actions in relation to adaptation to and mitigation of the implications of accelerated climate change on people, business and ecosystems in the Biosphere.

Enhance Social Cohesion & Community Regeneration

We will encourage and support attitudes, actions and events which develop links between individuals, groups, communities and between urban and rural areas to develop strong partnerships between local stakeholders and different levels of administration.

Promote Local Culture and Local Products

We will support and promote local culture, food, crafts, arts and respect local heritage and cultural traditions, including the preservation, protection and enhancement of heritage sites throughout the region.

Develop Knowledge, Understanding and Promote Research

We will support, promote and disseminate knowledge and understanding based on new research and better elaboration of existing knowledge and of those special relationships and qualities in the natural environment, culture, society and economy that make up the Biosphere and secure ecosystem services into the future.

Develop Regional, National & International Learning

We will support, promote and enable the active use of the Biosphere as a learning site and living laboratory for sustainable development to demonstrate innovative approaches to enhance cooperation amongst academic, political, practitioner and stakeholder communities to address and solve context specific problems to improve environmental, economic and social conditions for people and ecosystem wellbeing.

Cooperation & Networking

We will continually encourage exchanges and sharing of experience, information, good practice, research and methodologies through learning and networking opportunities at the local, regional, national and international level, including the WNBR and MAB Networks.

Enhance Health and Wellbeing

We will support and promote attitudes and actions which develop enjoyment of, and pleasure from the natural environment and develop links between individuals and communities and their environment to improve health and wellbeing.

Minimize Impacts

We will seek innovative solutions to mitigate or avoid undesirable environmental, social and cultural impacts. We will encourage activities, services and facilities that do not threaten the integrity of heritage resources or systems.

Be a Part of the Community

We will collaborate and share knowledge and ideas with partners within our community, and we will participate in the stewardship of people and nature in the pursuit of sustainable development.

Educate and Raise Awareness

We will strive to educate our employees, peers, community and visitors on the principles outlined in the Charter and, through our actions, contribute to the emergence of professionals and practitioners who can represent the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere as a Charter Member.

Monitor Progress

We will prepare a statement/monitoring report every two years summarising how we have, individually and, collectively contributed to the development of the principles of the Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere.

Note 7. Biosphere Partnership Membership

The Biosphere Partnership has an independent Chair, Professor Roger Crofts

Forestry Commission Scotland
Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
Scottish Natural Heritage
Scottish Government Rural Payments Inspections Directorate
South Ayrshire Council
East Ayrshire Council
Dumfries & Galloway Council
Ayrshire LEADER, Local Action Group (LAG)
University of Glasgow, Crichton Campus
Crichton Carbon Centre
Ayrshire Food Network & Ayrshire Farmers Market
Scottish Power Renewables
Scottish Water
National Farmers Union Scotland
Dalmellington Partnership
Carrick Community Council Forum
Coalfields Community Federation
Cree Valley Community
Visit Scotland
Scottish Land and Estates
Gatehouse of Fleet Community Council
Dumfries & Galloway LEADER, Local Action Group (LAG)
Balmaclellan Community Representative
Ayrshire Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Forum
Destination Dumfries & Galloway (DD&G)
RSPB

