## CANAPE-02A-colour

## Guide for Partners – Natural Capital Asset Check

**Definition of Natural Capital**

Natural capital includes all natural resources in air, water, sea, land and below-ground that support human societies. Crucially, it also includes the physical, biological and chemical processes (e.g. weathering, the water cycle, evolution, nutrient cycling, recruitment and ecological interactions). Accordingly, natural capital includes biotic and abiotic elements (as opposed to only biodiversity) and these need not be interacting, as is implicit in the definition of an ecosystem.

This definition is adapted from “*Towards a risk register for natural capital”* Mace et al, 2015.

**Method**

1. Identify the area you wish to assess (the Assessment Area), and the Major Habitat Types within the area.
2. For each of the Major Habitat types within the Assessment Area, identify the ecosystem services that can be gained from it. Use the list in the Major Habitat Type Assessment table below.
3. For each Major Habitat, fill out the Major Habitat Type Assessment table
4. Once the tables are completed, use the data to complete the summary table, table 2.

**Guidance**

**Assessment Area**

The area should be one that is relevant to the project, where you have some information on the natural capital. This could be an administrative, water catchment or a project buffer zone boundary. It is important that this area makes sense to users of the Natural Capital Asset Check.

**Completing the Major Habitat Type Assessment**

The table below is to be completed for each major habitat type identified within the assessment area.   
  
Within the third column ‘Reasons achievement of the benefit in this habitat is at risk, insert a general narrative here covering;

* Percentage or relative amount of assessment area this major habitat type covers
* How this major habitat type is generally used (For example with Farmland, is it mainly arable or pasture?)
* Direct pressures on the major habitat type (Climate change, land use change for example)
* Indirect pressures on the major habitat type (lack of subsidy, low food prices, pollution from outside sources)

For descriptions of each benefit, see the key **Descriptions of Benefit (ecosystem services)**.

For a more detailed overview of the original application, see “*Towards a risk register for natural capital,”* Mace et al (2015).

**Major Habitat Type Assessment - Table 1**

**<Insert Major Habitat Type>**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Benefit (Ecosystem Service)** | **Risk Assessment** | **Reasons achievement of the benefit in this habitat is at risk** | **Trend** |
| Food | *(Enter the risk level - High, Medium, Low, No significant risk, Positive)* | (see guidance above) | *Is the risk level increasing, decreasing, or staying constant? Why?* |
| Fibre |  |  |  |
| Energy |  |  |  |
| Clean Water |  |  |  |
| Clean Air |  |  |  |
| Recreation |  |  |  |
| Aesthetics |  |  |  |
| Hazard Protection |  |  |  |
| Wildlife |  |  |  |
| Climate change prevention |  |  |  |

**Key to Descriptions of Benefit (ecosystem services)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Food | Arable and pasture, but also lakes and rivers ability to yield fish. |
| Fibre | Cotton, Hemp, timber for construction and pulping. |
| Energy | Biomass, Biogas. It could also include peat cut for burning. |
| Clean Water | Ecosystem ability to clean nutrients from water, and in storing water to keep it available. |
| Clean Air | Removal of pollutants such as PM10 from the atmosphere |
| Recreation | Tourism, and local visitors – Walking, Cycling, kayaking etc. |
| Aesthetics | Attractiveness to visitors and locals. Potential measure is local tourism economy. |
| Hazard Protection | Protection against floods, fire or other natural disasters |
| Wildlife | Priority Habitats, support for rare species etc |
| Climate change prevention | Carbon storage, or releasing of carbon into the atmosphere at a non-natural rate. |

**Completing the Summary Table - Table 2**

Once the assessments above have been completed, fill in the summary table on the next page using the colour code set out in the key. The Colour entered into each box is determined by the risk level entered into the risk column, and the “I/D/-“ is determined by the answer in the trend column.   
  
Filling out this table is a good opportunity to check that the work in Table 1 makes sense, and whether the risk levels assigned are proportionate to each other, taking into account the initial questions.

* Percentage or relative amount of assessment area this major habitat type covers
* How this major habitat type is generally used (For example with Farmland, is it mainly arable or pasture?)
* Direct pressures on the major habitat type (climate change, land use change for example)
* Indirect pressures on the major habitat type (lack of subsidy, low food prices, pollution from outside sources)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Farmland** | **Semi natural grassland** | **Fen and reedbed** | **Woodland** | **Freshwater** | **Urban** |
| Food |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Fibre |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Energy |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Clean water |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Clean air |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Recreation |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Aesthetics |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hazard protection |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Wildlife |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Equitable climate |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Key**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Colour | Meaning | Explanatory Note |
| No Fill | No Information | To be used where there is no data available on the particular ecosystem service from that ecosystem. Also applicable where there is no service – for example if a bog habitat has no function in producing fibre, then this should be left blank. |
|  | No Significant Risk | To be used when the ecosystem can carry on providing the current service at the current rate without any significant risk to the ecosystem. |
|  | Low Risk | To be used when there is a low risk that the ecosystem will not be able to carry on providing the current service at the current rate. |
|  | Medium Risk | To be used when there is a medium risk that the ecosystem will not be able to carry on providing the current service at the current rate |
|  | High Risk | To be used when there is a high risk that the ecosystem will not be able to carry on providing the current service at the current rate. |
|  | Positive Impacts | This indicates that there is evidence that the capacity to deliver the ecosystem service is increasing |
| I | Increasing | The risk is expected to increase in the future if there are no new interventions. |
| D | Decreasing | The risk is expected to decrease in the future if there are no new interventions |
|  | Constant | The risk is expected to remain the same if there are no new interventions. |