

Five iconic British habitats facing devastation - AiDash

*Top five UK habitats in urgent need of protection revealed
AI and satellite technology can help turn the tide and safeguard biodiversity*

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, April 22, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As the urgency to address the global climate crisis intensifies, the importance of preserving iconic British habitats has become paramount in safeguarding the nation's biodiversity and combating climate change.

As one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world, the UK's acute ecologist shortage has intensified the pressure on these remaining vital habitats.

According to leading Climate Tech SaaS company AiDash, the top five British habitats that are most at risk of near-term depletion are:

1. Lowland fens
2. Lowland raised bogs
3. Blanket bogs
4. Woodlands
5. Hedgerows

These habitats are not only rich in biodiversity but also play a crucial role in carbon sequestration and ecosystem regulation.



Bogs are hugely important carbon sinks – according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) a near natural bog can remove 3.54 tonnes of carbon dioxide per hectare per year. Likewise, woodlands remove around 21 million tonnes of carbon dioxide a year, projected to decline to around 19 million tonnes by 2030. By covering 13% of land area in the UK, these woodland areas are vital in preserving the biodiversity within their footprint. Lowland fens – a type of peat-accumulating wetland – also make for highly diverse habitats, containing around one third of all plant species native to the UK.

Lining roads and footpaths, hedgerows play a crucial role in helping to reduce soil erosion and water run-off on arable land. These strips of woodland also provide nesting and food for birds such as the blue tit. Together, these five habitats provide essential services that contribute to the overall health and stability of the environment.

However, the condition of hedgerows, bogs, and woodland sites in the UK has deteriorated significantly in recent years. [In 2022](#), the condition of 23,004 hectares of protected upland bog sites was classified as 'unfavourable', marking a 50% increase from 2018. 39% of blanket bogs are likewise classified as 'unfavourable'. Similarly, only 40% of protected woodland sites in England were classified as 'favourable'. Hedgerows have also undergone a steady decline, decreasing in length by 24% from 1984 to 2007.

The importance of these habitats cannot be overstated – peatlands cover approximately 12% of the UK's land area and are particularly critical as they provide essential ecosystem services, carbon storage, and water regulation. Restoring 55% of peatlands to near-natural conditions could yield net benefits estimated at up to £51 billion, primarily through climate change mitigation.

Without adequate habitat monitoring and preservation, the extinction of species in the UK will accelerate, with catastrophic and irreversible consequences projected by 2100, if change is not forthcoming. Inadequate habitat mapping around rivers will also increase flooding and water provisioning issues. If the UK cannot make adequate biodiversity net gains, this number is likely to increase further and cause irreversible loss of iconic British habitats and species. AiDash predicts several iconic habitats will be lost forever by 2050.

To address this crisis, the UK must support ecologists by leveraging technology and AI for precise biodiversity monitoring and conservation efforts. Even with a concerted and coordinated effort, there isn't the adequate human resource to tackle the issues unaided. Earth observation, combined with AI, enables comprehensive mapping and monitoring of habitats even in remote or inaccessible areas, meaning that tasks which might previously have taken months or years are able to be completed in a fraction of the time, massively shortening the timelines for positive impact.

"We are at a crossroads in the history of the UK's biodiversity," says Shashin Mishra, VP of EMEA

at AiDash. "We have to accept and acknowledge that considerable damage has already been done, but that there is still the opportunity to reverse the tide. But only if we take the matter seriously today, combining our collective knowledge, resource, technologies, and efforts to ensure that we take the appropriate steps to ensure meaningful positive change.

"With higher-resolution imaging and hyperspectral analysis, we can identify habitat health, soil, water contaminants, and other critical factors influencing biodiversity. Utilising AI and satellite technology allows us to accelerate the process of identifying and prioritising depleted habitats, which can take years without these tools. Technology bridges the ecological skills gap and will ensure the preservation of iconic habitats for future generations."

— ENDS —

About AiDash:

AiDash is making critical infrastructure industries climate-resilient and sustainable with satellites and AI. Using our full-stack SaaS solutions, customers in electric, gas, and water utilities, transportation, and construction are transforming asset inspection and maintenance – and complying with biodiversity net gain mandates and carbon capture goals. Our customers deliver ROI in their first year of deployment with reduced costs, improved reliability, and achieved sustainability goals. Learn more at www.aidash.com.

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