



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Defra Peat Team:

Our policy for the future of peat

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What is peat and peatland?



What is peat and peatland?

- Peat is mainly partly decomposed plant material.
- Peatlands are wetland landscapes that are characterised by waterlogged organic soils made of dead and decaying plants.
- Sometimes, for example in the uplands where there is high rainfall bogs, may be extensive. In the lowlands bogs can form even in low rainfall areas where drainage is impeded by topography.
- Peat formation is a slow process – accumulation may be 1mm per year and bogs have been forming in some parts of England for at least 7000 years so the deposits can be several metres deep.
- Bogs are the most widespread semi-natural habitat in the UK but blanket bog is globally rare - with 13% of the world's blanket bog found in the UK.

Where we want to get to...

England Peat Action Plan 2021

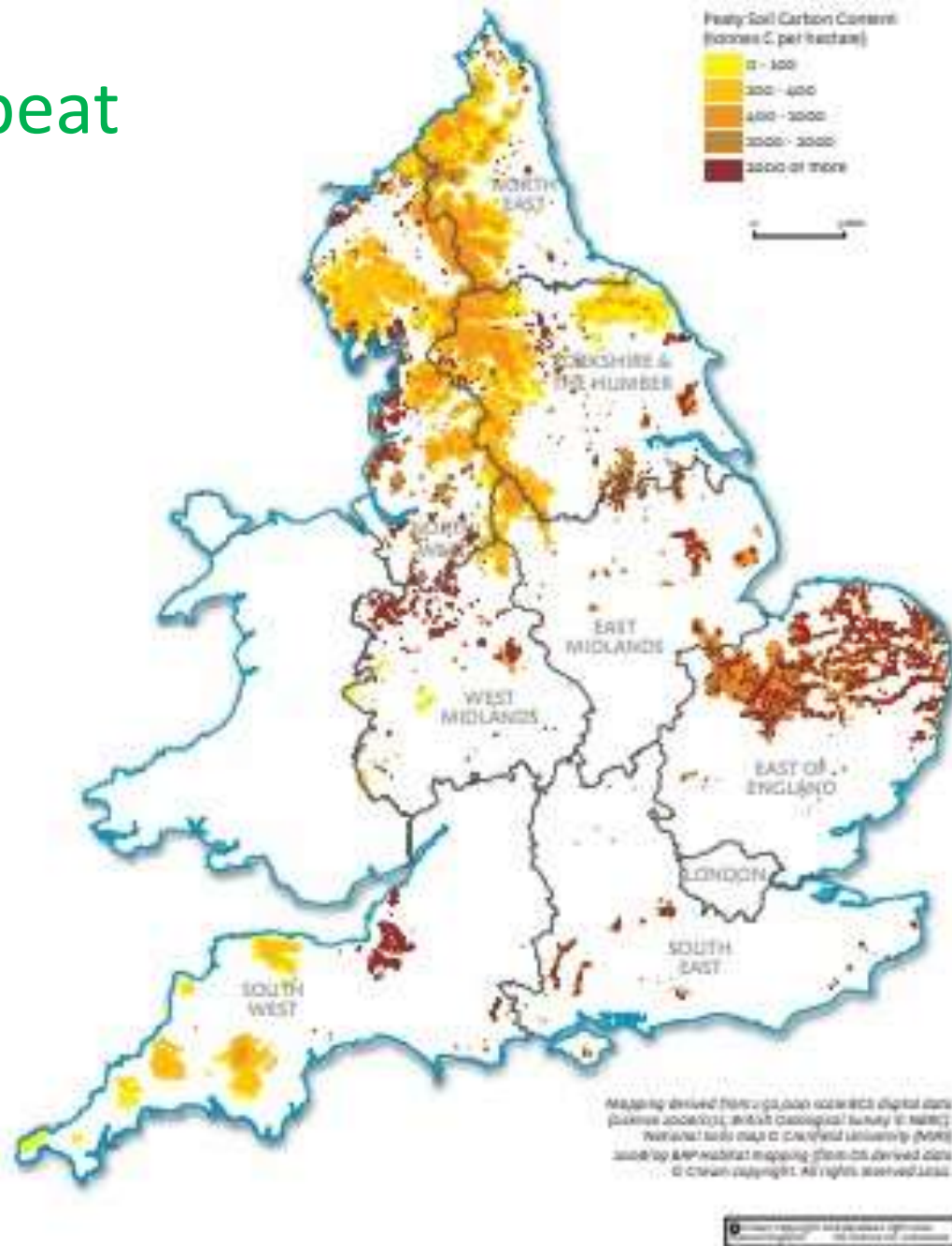


Where we want to get to...

England Peat Action Plan 2021

- We want all our peatland to meet the needs of **wildlife, people** and the **planet**.
- All uses of peatland should keep the peat wet and in the ground.
- We will ensure that all our peatlands, not just deep or protected peat, are sustainably managed by **2030**, or in good hydrological condition, or under restoration management by **2040**.

Where is the peat in England?



What are Defra doing about it?



Drosera rotundifolia
Image credit: Geonarve

Coir bunds



What are Defra doing about it?

- Our policy remains that we intend to legislate to restrict, and ultimately ban, the sale of peat and peat containing products.
- There is good support for this from the public and within Parliament
- We have seen a significant reduction in peat use, due to the demand for peat-free growing media from an increasingly environmentally aware public.
- Peat use has reduced from 2,292,000 cubic metres in 2020 to 950,000 cubic metres in 2022.
- In the “amateur” sector the reduction is from 1,521,000 cubic metres to 471,000 cubic metres.

What is being considered for the proposed ban?

- Proposed technical exemptions have already been identified for propagation plugs using less than 150ml of substrate and for casing material for mushroom production.
 - Conservation exemption for red list species
 - If evidence is provided that other plant types or production processes require a technical exemption, we will consider it
 - Our analysis suggests that these exemptions will permit the continued use of peat at just over 40% of current professional use after 2026 through until 2030.
 - Imports of peat in container volumes less than 150ml will currently be able to continue up to 2030.
 - We intend to apply the same restrictions, and exemptions, to imports and domestically produced products containing peat.
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Thankyou for your time

