



# The Scottish Parliament

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| <b>(For official use only)<br/>PUBLIC PETITION NO.</b> | <b>PE1229</b> |
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Should you wish to submit a public petition for consideration by the Public Petitions Committee please refer to the guidance leaflet [How to submit a public petition](#) and the Guidance Notes at the back of this form.

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| <b>1. NAME OF PRINCIPAL PETITIONER</b>   |
| Craig Macadam, on behalf of Biological Recording in Scotland (BRISC)   |
| <b>2. TEXT OF PETITION</b>   |
| Calling on the Scottish Parliament to urge the Scottish Government to establish integrated local and national structures for collecting, analysing and sharing biological data to inform decision making processes to benefit biodiversity   |
| <b>3. ACTION TAKEN TO RESOLVE ISSUES OF CONCERN BEFORE SUBMITTING THE PETITION</b>   |
| <p>For a number of years BRISC has lobbied SNH and local authorities to support a Scottish network of local recording groups and biological records centres to collect, analyse and disseminate biological information, but in this we have had very limited success. SNH staff have been generally sympathetic, but no central policy has been achieved to help set up such a recording network or provide support for local recording groups or centres.</p> <p>We have made contact with a number of MSPs: Michael Russell, Sarah Boyack, Ted Brocklebank, Roseanna Cunningham, Robin Harper, Patrick Harvie, Christopher Harvey and Iain Smith</p>   |
| <b>4. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</b>   |
| <p>All nature conservation, whether relating to species or habitats, is based on the knowledge of where it is and how scarce it is. This knowledge relies entirely on data, collected over time by enthusiasts and experts, professionals and volunteers. It is critical that all these efforts are properly co-ordinated.</p> <p>The purpose of this petition is to urge Scottish Ministers to help put in place a network of formal biological data-sharing partnerships all over Scotland. These partnerships would identify, collate, mobilise, and possibly gather the biological data required to inform land-management decision-making, by public as well as by private bodies, thus enabling them to exercise their duty to further the conservation of biodiversity as stipulated in the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004. In addition, these data sharing partnerships would make biodiversity information readily available to everyone</p> |

through the National Biodiversity Network.

At present, key biological data are not being used consistently to inform planning and development decisions, possibly due to inaccessibility, non-existence, or simply by being ignored.

Wherever possible the network of data-sharing partnerships would involve existing local biological recording groups as well as public bodies. Such structures would support the continuing work of the large body of volunteer recorders and ensure greater availability of information to decision makers and an increased flow of data to the National Biodiversity Network.

A formal network of data-sharing partnerships would significantly enhance the delivery of local, Scottish and UK biodiversity action plan targets.

**5. DO YOU WISH YOUR PETITION TO BE HOSTED ON THE PARLIAMENT'S WEBSITE AS AN E-PETITION?**

**YES**    Yes

**NO**

If "Yes" please enter a closing date for gathering signatures on your petition (we usually recommend a period of around six weeks). Please also provide at least one comment to set the scene for an on-line discussion on the petition, not exceeding ten lines of text.

**CLOSING DATE**

09/01/09

**COMMENTS TO STIMULATE ON-LINE DISCUSSION**

High quality biological data is the bedrock of nature conservation, but gets very little support from the public purse. Whether due to lack of quality data, difficulty of access or simply negligence, it is disappointing how few local authorities are serious about taking nature conservation into account in their decision making, in spite of the biodiversity duties imposed on them by the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy and the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004.