

Overview

This standard is about the creation and management of a range of habitats. This involves the establishment of suitable site conditions and appropriate vegetation.

You are expected to carry out these activities following specifications based upon site management plans within the context of Biodiversity Action Plans (local, UK, species and habitat action plans). It is essential that you understand the basic ecology of the habitat you are working in and the effects that your work will have on it.

You must carry out this work in a way which minimises the impact on the natural environment and enhances its nature, conservation and recreational value.

The use of power tools and application of chemicals must only be undertaken if you have the appropriate certification.

You must carry out your work in line with appropriate permissions and licences. Permissions and licences may relate to work on designated sites (sites of scientific interest, nature reserves, conservation areas, etc.), to specific types of work (tree felling etc.) or to the presence of protected species within that site.

This standard applies to employees or volunteers who are involved in the conservation of habitats and species.

**Performance
criteria**

You must be able to:

- P1 carry out all work in accordance with environmental and relevant health and safety legislation, risk assessment requirements and company policies
- P2 use and maintain tools and equipment in a clean and serviceable condition throughout the work
- P3 keep the site clear of any unnecessary obstacles and waste material
- P4 carry out work in a manner which causes minimal disturbance to the surrounding environment
- P5 carry out your work in line with relevant legal and organisational requirements
- P6 prepare the site for habitat management work
- P7 select vegetation according to the site management plan and any prevailing constraints
- P8 use the correct techniques to manage the habitat in line with site specifications
- P9 create or maintain the required conditions to protect or establish the habitat in line with site specifications
- P10 dispose of waste and excess materials safely to minimise environmental risk and in accordance with legal requirements
- P11 where incidental damage occurs take appropriate action

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1 how to identify hazards and assess risks
- K2 how to interpret and act on risk assessments
- K3 how to select, use and maintain tools and equipment
- K4 how to interpret site specifications and management plans
- K5 your responsibilities under current environmental and health and safety legislation and codes of practice
- K6 the effect that site conditions will have on the growth of vegetation, habitat quality and landscape value
- K7 the environmental value (in terms of biodiversity, public access and of historic/ archaeological value) of work sites, the potential effects of your work on the environment and how to control these
- K8 the effect that the positioning, mix and density of vegetation establishment will have on the habitat and landscape quality
- K9 ways of encouraging natural regeneration
- K10 the potential courses of damage to vegetation and the ways in which vegetation can be protected
- K11 how to recognise age, state and type of vegetation
- K12 habitat management techniques and how to carry them out
- K13 how your work fits into local biodiversity action plans
- K14 the implications of the legislation that affects your work, including any permissions or licences that are required
- K15 correct methods of disposing of waste and excess material

Glossary

Habitat types: natural and semi-natural areas such as dunes and dune slacks; reed beds and wetlands; woodlands; moorland; lowland heath; areas of sympathetically managed farmland such as hedgerows, water meadows and hay meadows; or amenity areas and areas of urban regeneration.

Habitat-specific work:

- opening up of woodland canopy or coppicing to promote woodland wildflowers
- management to encourage the growth of food plants for specific insects
- improving native species through re-introductions
- control of invasive, non-native plant and animal species
- manipulation of water levels
- erosion control
- scrub control in reed beds, grasslands or heathlands
- site amelioration and habitat creation in urban or post-industrial sites
- creation of open areas in woodland through selective felling
- management of marine habitats improving marsh, wetland, seagrass or riparian communities through re-vegetation and natural re-contouring of landscapes
- Improving shellfish beds through seeding juvenile shellfish, creating adult spawner sanctuaries, introducing appropriate substrates etc.
- working with coastal and marine authorities to develop ecologically compatible dredging, shoreline protection and recreational activities
- control of grazing animals

Site conditions:

- soil
- water
- drainage
- slopes and levels
- containers/planters

Protection from:

- unwanted competing growth
- prevailing environmental conditions
- humans
- animals

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