

Conservation objectives and definitions of favourable condition for designated features of interest



These Conservation Objectives relate to all designated features on the SSSI, whether designated as SSSI, SPA, SAC or Ramsar features.

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Name of Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	
East Dartmoor	
Names of designated international sites	
Special Area for Conservation (SAC)	Dartmoor
Special Protection Area (SPA)	Not applicable
Ramsar	Not applicable
Relationship between site designations	
East Dartmoor SSSI is a part of the larger Dartmoor SAC	

Version control information	
Status of this Version (Draft, Consultation Draft, Final)	Final
Prepared by	[REDACTED]
Date of this version	8 th July 2009
Date of generic guidance on favourable condition used	Birds: 18th November 2004 Upland habitats: 12th January 2004 Earth science: 28th January 2004 Mammals (otter): 18th February 2004 Freshwater fauna (salmon): February 2006
Other notes/version history	For subalpine dry dwarf shrub-heath, the target for % cover of indicator species has been revised down from 60% to 50%, and for pioneer heath from 5-25%, to 5-10% following condition assessment of Unit 1 on 20th March 2007. This version supersedes that of 26 th March 2007 with revised template format.

Quality assurance information		
Checked by	Name:	Date:
	Signature	

Site-specific references used to produce conservation objectives	
Birds	<p>Summary of Dartmoor ring ouzel fieldwork 2004 – Warren House area (Hibbert, R)</p> <p>Smaldon, R. (2006) Personal communication with Simon Bates in respect of location of hen harrier roosts.</p> <p>East Dartmoor SSSI 'criteria sheet' dated 15th October 1986.</p>
Upland habitats	<p>Shaw, S.C. & Wheeler, B.D. (1990) Comparative survey of habitat conditions and management characteristics of herbaceous poor-fen vegetation types. Volumes 1 & 2, plus detailed site reports by Dr Wanda Fojt in East Dartmoor SSSI science file.</p> <p>Rodwell, J.S. (Editor) (1991) British Plant Communities. Volume 2: Mires and heaths.</p> <p>Rural Development Service (2005) An assessment of vegetation condition and the impact of grazing on Chagford Common, Fernworthy section, Dartmoor, 2005.</p> <p>English Nature (1997-2006) Results of condition assessment of East Dartmoor SSSI site units.</p> <p>Nature Conservancy Council (1987) National Vegetation Classification of East Dartmoor SSSI.</p>
Earth science	<p>Earth Science Branch (1993) Site Management Brief for East Dartmoor SSSI.</p>
Mammals (otter)	<p>Codling, I.D., Mistry, R.M., Solomon, D., & Mason, S. (2004): Site characterisation of the Dartmoor cSAC and associated rivers for the purposes of the review of consents project – draft final report</p> <p>Data on records within the East Dartmoor SSSI from Devon Biological Records Centre.</p>
Freshwater fauna (salmon)	<p>Codling, I.D., Mistry, R.M., Solomon, D., & Mason, S. (2004): Site characterisation of the Dartmoor cSAC and associated rivers for the purposes of the review of consents project – draft final report</p> <p>Cowx & Fraser (2003) Monitoring the Atlantic Salmon.</p> <p>Salmon Action Plan for the River Dart – consultation draft and final documents (EA, 2003)</p>
Other	<p>Lichens of the Dartmoor rocks (Giavarini, V.J.). Lichenologist 22 (4): 367-396 (1990)</p> <p>Giavarini, V.J. (2006) Personal communication with Simon Bates in respect of location, species and management for rare lichens within East Dartmoor SSSI.</p>

Contents of full conservation objectives document	
Cover sheet	This document
Appendix 1	Whole site summary of East Dartmoor SSSI Conservation Objectives (First draft: 6th March 2006)
Appendix 2	Summary of East Dartmoor SSSI Conservation Objectives by site unit (First draft: 6th March 2006)
Appendix 3	Explanation of terms used in Appendices 1 & 2
Appendix 4	Favourable condition table for East Dartmoor SSSI conservation objectives (First draft: 6th March 2006)
Map 1	1987 National Vegetation Classification
Map 2	Sensitive (no burn) areas
Map 3	Boundary of Birch Tor geological interest

Conservation Objectives and definitions of Favourable Condition: notes for users

Conservation Objectives

SSSIs are notified because of specific biological or geological features. Conservation Objectives define the desired state for each site in terms of the features for which they have been designated. When these features are being managed in a way which maintains their nature conservation value, then they are said to be in 'favourable condition'. It is a Government target that 95% of the total area of SSSIs should be in favourable condition by 2010.

Definitions of Favourable Condition

The Conservation Objectives are accompanied by one or more habitat extent and quality definitions for the special interest features at this site. These are subject to periodic reassessment and may be updated to reflect new information or knowledge; they will be used by Natural England and other relevant authorities to determine if a site is in favourable condition. The standards for favourable condition have been developed and are applied throughout the UK.

Use under the Habitats Regulations

The Conservation Objectives and definitions of favourable condition for features on the SSSI may inform the scope and nature of any 'appropriate assessment' under the Habitats Regulations. An appropriate assessment will also require consideration of issues specific to the individual plan or project. The habitat quality definitions do not by themselves provide a comprehensive basis on which to assess plans and projects as required under Regulations 20-21, 24, 48-50 and 54 - 85. The scope and content of an appropriate assessment will depend upon the location, size and significance of the proposed project. Natural England will advise on a case by case basis.

Following an appropriate assessment, competent authorities are required to ascertain the effect on the integrity of the site. The integrity of the site is defined in paragraph 20 of ODPM Circular 06/2005 (DEFRA Circular 01/2005) as the coherence of its ecological structure and function, across its whole area, that enables it to sustain the habitat, complex of habitats and/or the levels of populations of the species for which it was classified. The determination of favourable condition is separate from the judgement of effect upon integrity. For example, there may be a time-lag between a plan or project being initiated and a consequent adverse effect upon integrity becoming manifest in the condition assessment. In such cases, a plan or project may have an adverse effect upon integrity even though the site remains in favourable condition.

The formal Conservation Objectives for European Sites under the Habitats Regulations are in accordance with paragraph 17 of ODPM Circular 06/2005 (DEFRA Circular 01/2005), the reasons for which the European Site was classified or designated. The entry on the Register of European Sites gives the reasons for which a European Site was classified or designated.

Explanatory text for Tables 2 and 3

Tables 2, 2a and 3 set out the measures of condition which we will use to provide evidence to support our assessment of whether features are in favourable condition. They are derived from a set of generic guidance on favourable condition prepared by Natural England specialists, and have been tailored by local staff to reflect the particular characteristics and site-specific circumstances of individual sites. Quality Assurance has ensured that such site-specific tailoring remains within a nationally consistent set of standards. The tables include an audit trail to provide a summary of the reasoning behind any site-specific targets etc. In some cases the requirements of features or designations may conflict; the detailed basis for any reconciliation of conflicts on this site may be recorded elsewhere.

Conservation Objectives

The Conservation Objectives for this site are, subject to natural change, to maintain the following habitats and geological features in favourable condition (*), with particular reference to any dependent component special interest features (habitats, vegetation types, species, species assemblages etc.) for which the land is designated (SSSI, SAC, SPA, Ramsar) as individually listed in Table 1.

Habitat Types represented (Biodiversity Action Plan categories)

- Dwarf shrub heath
- Acid grassland
- Fen, marsh and swamp
- Bog

Geological features (Geological Site Types)

- Inland outcrop

(*) or restored to favourable condition if features are judged to be unfavourable.

Standards for favourable condition are defined with particular reference to the specific designated features listed in Table 1, and are based on a selected set of attributes for features which most economically define favourable condition as set out in Table 2, Table 2a and Table 3

Table 1: Individual designated interest features

BAP Broad Habitat type / Geological Site Type	Specific designated features	Explanatory description of the feature for clarification	SSSI designated interest features	SAC designated interest features	SPA bird populations dependency on specific habitats			Ramsar criteria applicable to specific habitats			
					Annex 1 species	Migratory species	Waterfowl assemblage	1a Wetland characteristics	2a Hosting rare species &c	3a 20000 waterfowl	3c 1% of population
Dwarf shrub heath	H4 <i>Ulex gallii</i> - <i>Agrostis curtisii</i> heath	European dry heaths	*	*							
	H12 <i>Calluna vulgaris</i> - <i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i> heath		*	*							
	M15 <i>Scirpus cespitosus</i> - <i>Erica tetralix</i> wet heath	North Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i>	*	*							
Fen, marsh and swamp	M4 <i>Carex rostrata</i> - <i>Sphagnum recurvum (fallax)</i> mire	Mire components of wet heath and bog	*								
	M6 <i>Carex echinata</i> - <i>Sphagnum recurvum (fallax) lauriculatum (denticulatum)</i> mire		*								
	M29 <i>Hypericum elodes</i> - <i>Potamogeton polygonifolius</i> soakway		*								
Bog	M21 <i>Narthecium ossifragum</i> - <i>Sphagnum papillosum</i> mire	Valley bog community	*								
Acid grassland	U3 <i>Agrostis curtisii</i> grassland	Acid grassland with abundant Bristle Bent, Sheep's-Fescue and Common Bent grasses	*								
	U4 <i>Festuca ovina</i> - <i>Agrostis capillaris</i> - <i>Galium saxatile</i> grassland		*								
Rivers &	<i>Salmo salar</i> Salmon		(*)	*							

streams	<i>Lutra lutra</i> Otter		(*)	*							
EO	South West England Igneous		*								

NB. Features where asterisks are in brackets (*) indicate habitats which are not notified for specific habitat interest (under the relevant designation) but because they support notified species.

Information contained in tables 2-3 can be found in Excel spreadsheets in the site electronic files at S:\Designated Sites\SSSI Sites\East Dartmoor\Objectives\conservation objectives on SSSI view