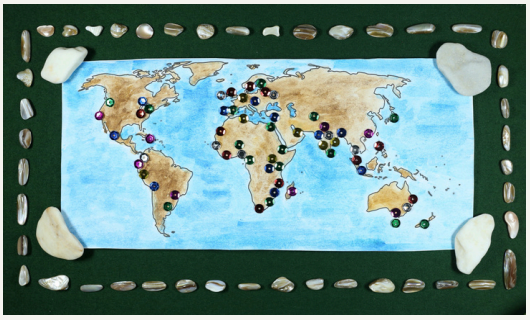
Biodiversity Baselines

a short primer:

NATURE POSITIVE UNIVERSITIES

NATURE POSITIVE PLEDGE

Universities all over the world have committed to action for nature by making a **Nature Positive Pledge**. This is a framework of four steps which can be applied at any scale. The first step of the pledge is working towards a **biodiversity baseline**.



WHAT IS A BIODIVERSITY BASELINE?

A biodiversity baseline allows us to measure change and impact by recording the state of nature and activities which could affect it at a particular point in time. Setting a baseline can help inform action now and in the future. There are many ways to go about it, depending on resources and ambition.

WHY IS A BASELINE IMPORTANT?

The principle of measuring a baseline, is to work towards *measurable* biodiversity uplift, known as *net* positive outcomes, on our campus land, related to the resources we use, and using our influence as universities within teaching, research and community engagement.

WHAT COMES NEXT?

A baseline is just the first step. It should be followed by agreeing specific time-bound targets for your organisation, working to meet them, monitoring progress and publishing your journey to be accountable and scale your impact.

Case Studies:

NATURE POSITIVE UNIVERSITIES

1 UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA

University of Melbourne set an institutional ‘no net loss’ target for their campus land and established an online dashboard for their community to see with a range of biodiversity measures, such as tree canopy cover, plantable area and species records.

2 GOVERNMENT DUNGAR COLLEGE BIKANER, INDIA

Government Dungar College embarked upon extensive restoration activities on their campus and beyond through the Familial Forestry initiative. Progress was recorded using before and after photographs detailing the extent of ecosystem change over time, showing the impact of their interventions.

3 UNIVERSITY OF TURKU, FINLAND

University of Turku carried out an extensive city-wide Bioblitz involving staff, students and members of the public to record plants and animals across their campuses, using citizen science platform iNaturalist in collaboration with university species experts.

4 UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, UK

University of Oxford have carried out a *biodiversity footprint* of their university activities, including land use, air and water pollution and resource use, associated with activities such as food, energy use, IT equipment and construction materials.

Get started:

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WHAT ARE YOUR MOTIVATIONS?

There are many reasons to take action for nature and set a biodiversity baseline. It is important to think what you would like to do with this data, who will collect and maintain it, and more importantly what kinds of targets and actions it might lead to.

WHAT RESOURCES DO YOU HAVE?

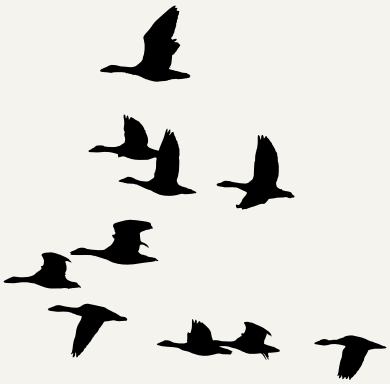
Ideally you will work with an ecologist to help assess your site's biodiversity, and plan future interventions. It is worth seeing if there are species or habitat experts in your organisation, or if you could make links with a local environmental NGO to help with this.

CAN YOU MAP THE HABITATS OF YOUR SITE?

You can create a habitat map of your site using an existing site-map, or you could create a new one using google maps. This can help identify the habitats and their condition, and identify opportunities for uplift. Photographs can be a useful way to record the current state of ecosystems.

WHAT DATA ALREADY EXISTS?

You can check which species have already been recorded on your site, either by staff, students or professional surveys, using public records or with citizen science platform such as **iNaturalist.** This may highlight particular species or ecosystems of concern or interest, and can provide a starting point for future surveys and monitoring.



Find out more:

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

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UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

UN environment programme

UNITED NATIONS DECADE ON ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION 2021-2030