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- The Government strategy on Biodiversity is set out in 'Biodiversity 2020: a strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (Defra)'.
 - Mission set out in strategy for the decade ending 2020 is 'to halt overall biodiversity loss, support healthy well-functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks, with more and better places for nature for the benefit of wildlife and people'.
 - The priority action up to 2020 is to halt biodiversity loss.
 - Strategy is clear that this involves action in a lot of disciplines, e.g. agriculture, fisheries, nature conservation.
 - Partnerships encouraged – not individual organisation tasked with delivering on their own.
 - The Strategy follows from the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) Strategic Plan 'Aichi' targets, which essentially sought to halt loss of biodiversity world-wide by 2020 and move towards net gain.
 - No obligation under the convention or domestic policy requiring individual project to achieve net gain.

Biodiversity net gain or no net loss

In its evidence to the Environmental Audit Committee Defra acknowledged that the objective of seeking no net loss to biodiversity is very challenging for a major infrastructure project such as HS2 and that this aim is as ambitious as for any similar infrastructure project worldwide.