

Rewilding: Nature Recovers [B2]

Questa tendenza ecologica consiste nel ripristinare la perdita di habitat e biodiversità con l'obiettivo di riportare le specie e gli ecosistemi al loro stato originario. I vantaggi sono molti, ma anche i rischi e le sfide.

Every year, millions of people enjoy exploring the British countryside. The South Downs, Lake District and Peak District are among the most popular national parks. But few visitors realise that every part of the British landscape has been [shaped](#) by centuries of human activity.

UNDER THREAT

Alongside homes and businesses, roads and bridges, the landscape has been mined and [quarried](#), [waterways](#) rerouted, land [reclaimed](#), forests [felled](#) and vast areas farmed and [grazed](#). Apex [predators](#) such as wolves and bears have been hunted to extinction. It is estimated that in Europe more than 80 per cent of land is degraded and less than 30 per cent of rivers are healthy. According to [assessments](#), the state of biodiversity in the UK is poor, with Britain ranking at 189 out of 218 countries. [One in six](#) UK species is under threat of extinction.

TURNING BACK TIME

One response, dating to the 1990s, has been rewilding. This involves the large-scale restoration of ecosystems back to how they were before human occupation, to the point where nature can sustain itself. In recent years, around one thousand rewilding projects have started up across Britain: from Loch Ness to Cornwall, from the Yorkshire Moors to the Knepp Estate in West Sussex.

FOOD PRODUCTION

Rewilding, like many green issues, has its challenges. Funding is a big issue. Food production is another. However, rewilding [aims](#) to use primarily unproductive or low productivity land. A recent report by the Green Alliance shows that while 70 per cent of UK land is used for food production, the least productive 20 per cent of this land provides just 3 per cent of total food.

WOLVES AND BEAVERS

Folklore is full of [tales](#) about dangerous [predators](#), such as wolves. Unsurprisingly, the idea of reintroducing apex [predators](#) as part of rewilding causes [concern](#). Wolves primarily hunt [deer](#), which helps to reduce overgrazing and supports the growth of woodland and mosaic habitats. The UK has just 13 per cent woodland cover, compared to the European average of 46 per cent. Since [banning](#) wolf hunting in Poland in the 1990s, wolves have spread across Europe, with few problems. There are no rewilding projects in Britain that plan to reintroduce wolves. In Scotland, however, there are proposals to reintroduce the [lynx](#), which also hunts [deer](#). One animal that has been reintroduced successfully as part of rewilding, in areas of the UK, is the [beaver](#). Beaver [dams](#) help to create [wetlands](#), they promote biodiversity and nature recovery, slowing water flow and reducing the risk of flash flooding. In drought, [beaver wetlands](#) can also provide valuable water reserves.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Across Britain, rewilding projects are part of the fight against climate change. By restoring [wetlands](#), [peatlands](#) and woodlands, for example, rewilded areas can [sequester](#) and store more carbon and protect against extreme weather. Rewilding can naturally help to clean [waterways](#) and produce cleaner air. For rewilding to be effective, it needs to work with local communities. The International Union for Conservation of Nature emphasises that it is particularly important to work with farmers, foresters and those who traditionally work on the land. Rewilding can offer

economic and social benefits, encouraging nature-based enterprises and creating green jobs.

WILDNESS

Rewilding can also have a positive impact on mental health and [wellbeing](#). If large-scale rewilding can spread across Britain, then future visitors to the countryside and national parks might be surprised by the true wildness they experience and the range of new species they encounter.

Glossary

- **shaped** = modellare
- **waterways** = corsi d'acqua
- **deer** = cervi
- **beaver** = castoro
- **lynx** = lince
- **dams** = dighe
- **quarried** = scavare
- **reclaimed** = reclamare
- **predators** = superpredatori
- **tales** = racconti
- **concern** = preoccupazione
- **wetlands** = terreni acquitrinosi
- **sequester** = segregare
- **grazed** = pascolare
- **assessments** = valutazioni
- **One in six** = una su sei
- **aims** = mirare
- **felled** = abbattere
- **banning** = vietare
- **peatlands** = terreni torbosi
- **wellbeing** = benessere