

Bridget Chadwick Sandlings Resident

October 7, 2020 – Bridget Chadwick:

Following on from my husband's description of this rare habitat, maybe you are aware of a recent news headline: a **'Lost decade for nature' as the UK fails on 17 of 20 UN biodiversity targets**. The government itself has said it failed on two-thirds of its targets; its 2015 **policy on biodiversity and ecosystems** states "In England, much of our biodiversity, including many of our birds, butterflies and plants, is declining (and insects of course). Our wildlife areas are too disjointed and fragmented, making it harder for wildlife to flourish and respond to climate change and other pressures."

SPR's proposed cable trenches would sever the wildlife corridor which stretches along 30 miles of the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB. This project, along with the proposed Nautilus and Eurolink projects which aim to connect here as well, will likely amount to 12-15 years of continuous works resulting in another permanent loss to precious biodiversity.

As an aside, trench works would go round three sides of a Specially Protected Area – which is hardly going to provide a safe haven for the duration. It's strange that the direct route through a golf course is more protected than our natural habitats, even though this could be much more easily reinstated.

My first point is, I'd like to be sure the Planning Inspectorate is seriously assessing this biodiversity issue.

Next, a 2019 Intergovernmental [Global Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystems](#) concluded that “we are eroding the very foundations of our economies, livelihoods, food security, health and quality of life.” All I have been led to believe is that SPR are bulldozing their way through with no acknowledgement of these factors. There are no significant local jobs here but instead will be job losses.

So, my second point is I'd like to be sure the Planning Inspectorate is seriously assessing the impact on our local tourist economy and on our national health through loss of amenity and nature for all.

And finally, I believe that this SPR project is flying in the face of the many policies, targets and reports set out by the government. For example:

1. Our own report on the 20 targets for 2020 that we signed up to at the 2010 Aichi Convention on Biological Diversity shows progress is too slow, **with protecting and restoring ecosystems a particular challenge**. And this same [Convention](#) is being repeated this very month with the Treasury commissioning another [Review of the Economics of Biodiversity](#).
2. A [25-Year Environment Plan](#) published by the May Government committed to improving biodiversity by creating new wildlife habitats but again [indicators](#) show short and long-term declines in bird and insect populations.
3. And another Public Bill Committee is due to report on the Environment Bill by 1st December – this is to make provision about targets, plans and policies to improve the natural environment; to protect it; about nature and biodiversity; and for conservation.

**BUT WHAT THE HELL IS THE POINT OF ALL THESE COMMITTEES AND CONVENTIONS????? This SPR project is another that flies in the face of all these policies. It is obvious that there is no joined-up thinking between different government departments and the objectives of one can just cancel out those of another.**

**Remember, “This is our rain forest”.** How can a so-called eco-project countenance green field sites instead of brown and all this desecration of rare habitats? Why is National Grid dictating that SPR join Sizewell’s power lines instead of installing new ones to existing industrial sites, especially in light of all the future intended projects in East Anglia?

**And how can we expect foreign-owned private companies to take care of our wildlife and biodiversity when our own government abdicates any responsibility for ensuring that their own targets are upheld. With National Grid, another private company, having carte blanche to dictate where these projects should go, with the bottom line of foreign-owned companies being about profit, and with government not doing the job it says needs to be done, what hope is there for OUR nature and biodiversity?**

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