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## ature Conservation

Nature conservation, land and biodiversity issues are a regular features of business corporate social responsibility statements and facility managers are usually involved in the development and implementation of biodiversity policies and action plans.

Most businesses use natural resources, such as paper, food products and clean water, somewhere in their operations. These resources are a function of a stable environment, maintained by complex interactions between diverse ranges of species.

For example, bees and other insects are needed to pollinate many crops, including many tree species; pollinators in turn need an unknown number of other species of plants and animals to provide the right habitats and food types.

It is impossible for anyone to replicate such ecosystems with a few species; instead, we need to maintain characteristic biodiversity so that the right conditions are created through the complex interactions of these species. The costs incurred by a company following the loss of ecosystem services, and the resources they support, are unpredictable but likely to be considerable.

Nature conservation helps to maintain a healthy and stable environment in which a business can operate; biodiversity is increasingly viewed by scientists and economists as a key part of economic stability. In the short-term, nature conservation affects business success because of its contribution to the maintenance of stable operating conditions.

There are various UK laws and acts of parliament that regulate the potential effects of business operations on wildlife and habitats. The UK Government's commitment to the nature conservation ensures the increasing relevance of the subject to facility managers. Relevant legislation includes The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and The Wild Mammals Protection Act 1996

Rising expectations of companies to provide consistent and accurate information about their nature conservation and social performance has led to a proliferation of certification schemes and standards. While this has provided companies with a range of options to choose from, the level to which certification schemes address biodiversity issues can vary greatly.

*A summary of the main certification schemes for nature conservation can be found at [www.businessandbiodiversity.org/standards\\_certifications\\_table.html](http://www.businessandbiodiversity.org/standards_certifications_table.html)*