
FRAMEWORK DEFINITION FOR A NATURE POSITIVE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT – MAY 2025

Working closely with a wide range of industry organisations, UKGBC is developing a [Framework Definition for a Nature Positive Built Environment](#) (Referred to going forward in the document as “the Framework Definition”). The Framework Definition is intended to provide clarity, tools and guidance on what “nature positive” means for professionals within the built environment industry. We are seeking your feedback to ensure it brings greater clarity on what a nature positive built environment looks like, that it addresses the issues holistically, and to build broad consensus and support for an agreed Framework Definition.

This consultation document provides an overview of progress made and forms the basis for collating feedback to create consensus on the current proposals.

This document comprises the following parts:

- [Part 1.](#) Background to and overview of the Framework Definition
- [Part 2.](#) Consultation outline and process
- [Part 3.](#) Consultation content
- [Part 4.](#) Consultation questions

If you have any questions, please contact us at: resilience.nature@ukgbc.org

RESILIENCE, RESOURCE USE AND NATURE PROGRAMME PARTNERS:



NATURE POSITIVE FRAMEWORK PROJECT PARTNERS:



PART 1. BACKGROUND TO & OVERVIEW OF THE FRAMEWORK DEFINITION

Why now?

We are at a tipping point in our relationship with nature. The loss of biodiversity and rapid degradation of ecosystems has reached critical levels due to factors including habitat destruction and land degradation. This is pushing us closer to irreversible changes and ecological collapse. In response, the [Global Biodiversity Framework](#) (GBF) has set an ambitious goal to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2030 and begin to reverse it by 2050. Amid this urgent need, the concept of "nature positive" has emerged and gained significant traction in recent years.

What is nature positive?

The term "nature positive" represents a collective effort to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and the negative impacts on the natural environment, transforming it into a shared goal: "[A Global Goal for Nature Positive by 2030](#)". The World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) define this as:

"Nature positive by 2030 refers to halting and reversing biodiversity loss by 2030 from a 2020 baseline, through measurable gains in the health, abundance, diversity, and resilience of species, ecosystems, and natural processes."

This ambitious 2030 target aligns with broader efforts to restore and enhance the natural world, ensuring that human activities no longer drive ecological decline but instead contribute to the recovery and resilience of ecosystems.

Clarity, consistency and credibility

Despite widespread adoption of the term, there is currently no universally agreed definition or framework for what "nature positive" means in practice. This ambiguity creates risks, including:

- **Greenwashing** – Without clear criteria, businesses may adopt the term superficially without making meaningful changes.
- **Fragmentation** – Differing interpretations across industries and regions may hinder collective action.
- **Lack of Accountability** – The absence of measurable benchmarks makes it difficult to track progress and drive genuine impact.

Why a Framework Definition?

The Framework aims to establish a robust and shared understanding of what nature-positive means for the built environment industry, one that provides clarity (including tools and guidance) and rigour, to support real-world impact. Its objective is to:

- Clarify what the term nature positive means for the built environment industry.
- Create rigour and accountability for nature positive claims via a robust and shared set of principles for the industry, as well as providing recommendations and examples that subsectors across the industry can relate to.
- Develop a clear understanding of the challenges behind the goal of a nature positive built environment industry and provide best practice examples.

What are the key aspects of The Framework Definition?

The Framework Definition is intended to provide a clear, shared understanding of what nature positive means for the UK built environment. It will include:

- an overview of the global context, the scope and relevance across building and infrastructure systems
- key definitions
- core principles to guide decision-making
- practical recommendations and a library of actions to support implementation across the sector.
- In future, it is intended to serve as a reference point to help drive alignment, consistency, and nature positive ambition across projects and organisations.

PART 2. CONSULTATION OUTLINE AND PROCESS

What format does the consultation take?

It's being run via an online form, which takes approximately 15 minutes to complete after reviewing the content shared above, and considers the following key sections:

- 1) About the respondent
- 2) Audience for The Framework Definition
- 3) Global context and essential definitions
- 4) Scope for a nature positive built environment
- 5) Principles for a nature positive built environment
- 6) Wrap up

You can access the consultation response form [here](#).

Over what period does the consultation take place?

From Thursday 15th of May 2025 until 5pm of Thursday 12th of June.

Who should respond?

This is an opportunity for **all** built environment stakeholders to provide feedback on The Framework Definition. We encourage anyone with an interest in nature and a sustainable built environment to respond, from experienced professionals to those with a general interest.

What will happen after the consultation closes?

Feedback received will be used to inform the development of the Framework Definition. A consultation response document will be produced and shared publicly on The Framework Definition for a [Nature Positive Built Environment webpage](#).

PART 3. CONSULTATION CONTENT

Section 1: About the respondent (Questions 1 to 7)

These questions gather basic information about the respondent and/or their organisation. This information will provide insights into the subsectors and the type of organisations we are receiving comments from, and support the interpretation of feedback received.

Section 2: Audience for Framework Definition (Questions 8 to 9)

While The Framework Definition is aimed at the whole built environment industry, we have identified key actors who, with more detailed guidance and actions, could significantly accelerate nature positive outcomes across the sector. These are currently:

- Architects, Designers, Urban Planners, Engineers
- Product manufacturers
- Developers
- Asset owners
- Consultants / Advisors

Section 3: Global Context and Core Definitions (Questions 10 to 18)

Embracing the global cross-industry goal is essential and putting it into the built environment industry perspective is key to driving meaningful action. Figure 1 integrates the global perspective with core definitions. This ensures alignment and provides a clear and shared reference for stakeholders to adopt for their nature positive approaches.

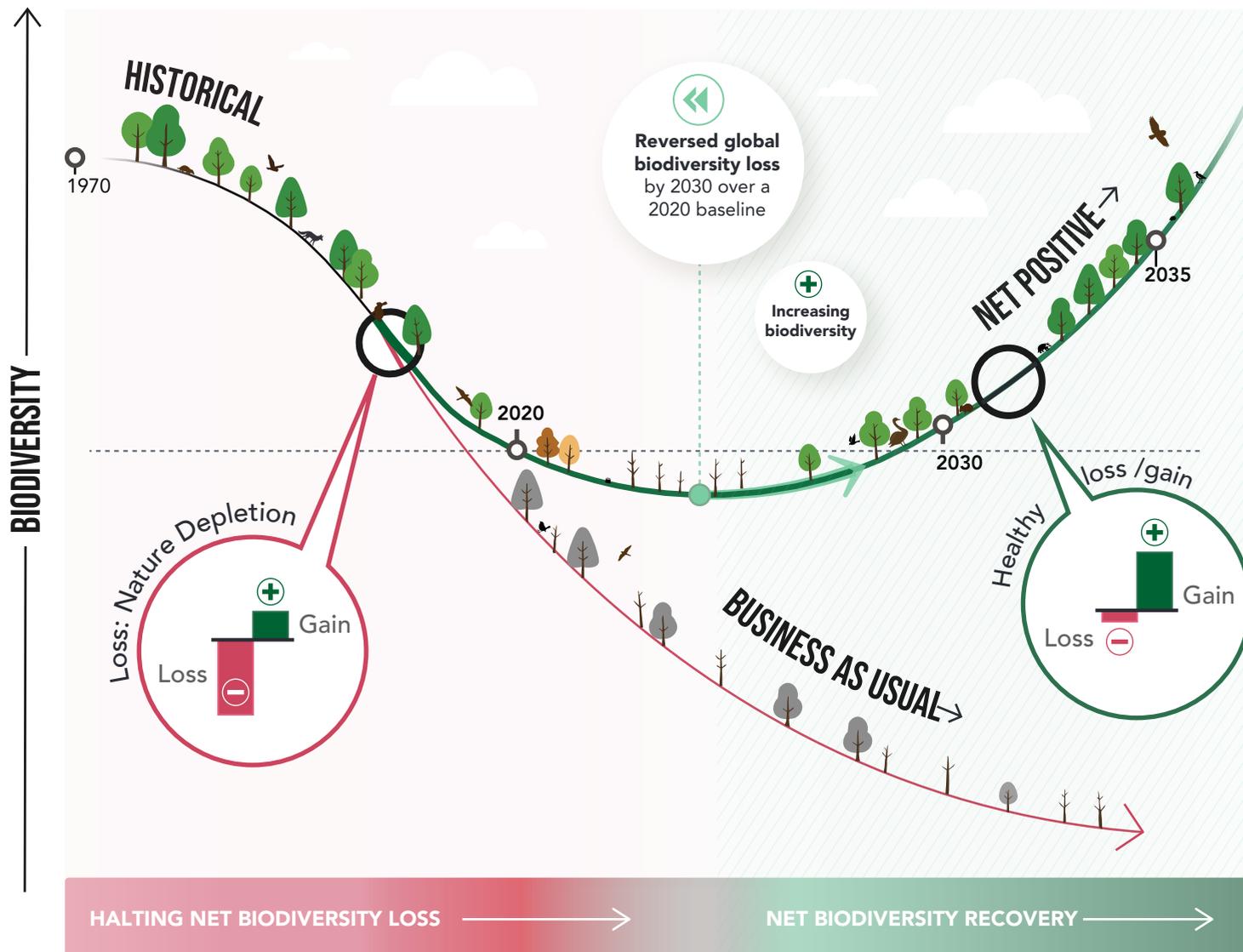
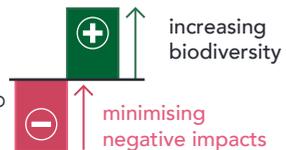
Please see **Figure 1, 'Nature positive, a global goal'**, on the following page.

NATURE POSITIVE, A GLOBAL GOAL

Halt and reverse global biodiversity loss by 2030 over a 2020 baseline

NATURE POSITIVE

Being 'Nature Positive' involves two important factors



DEFINITIONS

Biodiversity loss

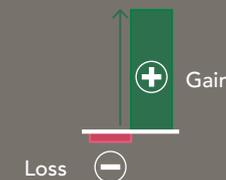
Biodiversity gain

Net Biodiversity loss



The decline or disappearance of biological diversity, encompassing reductions in species variety, genetic variability, and ecosystem integrity.

Net Positive



Actions or strategies that result in a measurable increase in the health, abundance, diversity, and resilience of species, populations, and ecosystems, compared to a specific baseline. There is not an official definition, however, the concept aligns with the broader goal of achieving a "net positive for nature".

No Net Biodiversity Loss



No net loss is defined as the point at which project-related impacts on biodiversity are balanced by measures taken to avoid and minimise the project's impacts, to undertake on-site restoration and finally to offset significant residual impacts, if any, on an appropriate geographic scale (e.g., local, landscape-level, national, regional.)

- ICUN

Regenerative



The process of regeneration, indicating the ability to renew, restore, or rejuvenate. Particularly appropriate to the built environment is the perspective of "Regenerative design", which is a process of restoring nature so humans and natural systems can co-exist and co-evolve in harmony. It is our pathway to a net-positive future, and a long-term shift to how humans interact with the natural environment.

- Arup

Section 4: Scope for a nature positive built environment (Questions 19 to 20)

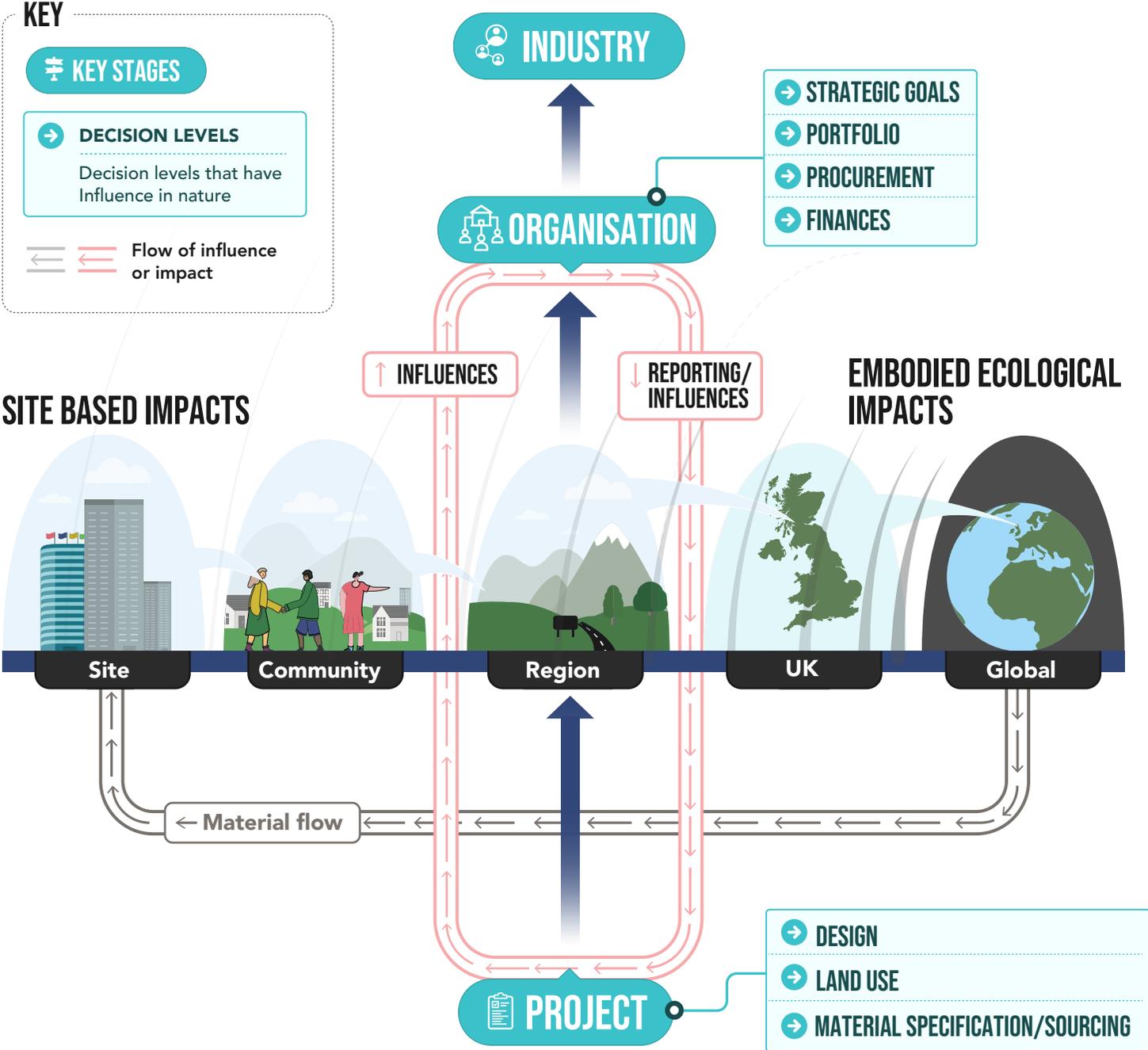
Figure 2, 'Scope for a nature positive built environment', aims to provide a shared understanding of what nature positive means across the built environment. It highlights:

- The breadth of considerations from site to global levels
- Factors such as building life cycle stages and temporal elements
- The range of influence for organisations and projects to support nature positivity

It will help teams and individuals identify where actions can be taken, and what influences should be considered across the building life cycle, over time, and within organisational processes.

Please see figure 2 on the following page

SCOPE FOR A NATURE POSITIVE BUILT ENVIRONMENT



Key dimensions of nature positive impacts

Spatial
Considers the areas impacted beyond the red line boundary, including the surrounding environment, supply chain reach, and effects from resource extraction to end-of-life disposal.

Building Life cycle
Accounts for all stages of a building's life, from design and construction to operation and retrofit, including upstream and downstream impacts within the supply chain.

Organisational and project level
Covers strategic, portfolio, and project-level considerations, ensuring alignment with broader nature-positive objectives.

Time
Acknowledges changes over time, from initial development through to long-term sustainability and ongoing adaptation.

Common terms used that influence the balance of nature:

+ GAIN

FOR EXAMPLE:

- Nature-based solutions
- Biodiversity Net Gain
- Urban Greening
- Rewilding
- Conservation

- LOSS

FOR EXAMPLE:

- Material extraction
- Material refinement and production
- Land reclamation
- Habitat fragmentation and destruction

Section 5: Principles for a nature positive built environment (Questions 21 to 22)

Nature positive principles for the built environment

The Framework outlines five Principles to support the built environment in contributing to the global goal of halting and reversing biodiversity loss by 2030, relative to a 2020 baseline. The Principles provide a strategic direction for embedding nature into decisions across spatial, temporal, and organisational levels, and encourage inclusive, systemic, and bold action. Together, they guide professionals in aligning development, regeneration and ongoing management of assets with nature positive outcomes across different project types, geographies, and time.

The principles:

- 1. Centre nature in decision-making**
Nature is central to every decision. Decision-making should inherently value biodiversity, ecosystem health, and the balance of onsite and offsite impacts, while recognising and focusing on the most material risks and opportunities for maximum positive impact.
- 2. Embrace a systemic and regenerative approach**
A systemic and regenerative approach values an understanding of the interconnections among the built environment industry, value chains, ecosystems, and societal systems. It fosters conditions where nature and communities thrive by designing for renewal and adaptability, contributing positively to the environment throughout the building project lifecycle. At the same time, it embraces a culture of collaboration, continuous learning, monitoring, and adaptation - recognising that long-term success comes from strategies that evolve over time.
- 3. Champion Just actions**
For a truly nature positive future, individuals and organisations must ensure that every decision and action is equitable, inclusive, and sensitive to social differences - especially for marginalised communities and those most affected by environmental change.
- 4. Focus on the local context**
Nature positive strategies are inherently rooted in local contexts. Recognising the unique characteristics, opportunities, and challenges of local ecosystems and communities is essential for meaningful impact.
- 5. Be bold and accountable**
Individuals and organisations must make strong and visionary commitments, take shared responsibility, and demonstrate unwavering dedication to realising them.

PART 4: CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

This section lists the questions asked in this consultation. For ease please keep this supporting document open while answering the questions in the online form, which can be accessed [here](#).

Section 1 - About the respondent

Personal details are strictly for the use of UKGBC and will not be shared with external individuals or organisations.

1. Full name*
2. Organisation*
3. Job Title (if you are currently unemployed, please refer to any professional training or knowledge you identify yourself with). *
4. Choose which sector of the built environment industry best applies to your role or organisation? *

Choose one from the list below:

- Sustainability Consultants
- Architects/Designers
- Multi-Disciplinary Consultants
- Constructors/Contractors
- Developers
- Property Consultants
- Government
- Engineering Consultancy
- Facilities Management
- Software/IT
- Construction Consultants/QS
- Charity/Member Org./Trade Body
- Local Authority
- Product Manufacturers
- University
- Finance and Investment
- Urban planners
- Other

5. If you said other, please specify
[FREE TEXT]
6. Email address*
7. Are you filling this out as an individual or on behalf of your organisation?*
8. Please add any additional information you would like to share with us in the free text box below.
[FREE TEXT]

Section 2 - Audience for the Framework Definition

In Part 3, section 2, page 5 of this document, the key audience for The Framework Definition is listed.

While the Framework Definition is aimed at the built environment sector, key stakeholder groups have been identified who, through the Framework's information and actions, have the potential to trigger further nature-positive actions across the industry.

9. To what extent do you agree with the list of primary audiences identified for The Framework Definition?

Choose one:

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly disagree

10. If you disagree or somewhat disagree, please briefly share your reasons.

[FREE TEXT]

Section 3 - Global context and core definitions

In Part 3, Section 3, Pages 5 and 6 of this document, the global perspective and core definitions (on the right-hand side of the diagram) that built environment stakeholders are outlined.

11. To what extent do you agree that this diagram effectively conveys the key aspects of the nature positive global goal and clearly supports the details of the contributing methods (concepts)?

Choose one:

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

12. If you disagree, please briefly share your reasons.

[FREE TEXT]

13. To what extent do you agree that the definitions provided are the most essential concepts for built environment stakeholders to understand to work towards a nature positive goal?

Choose one:

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly disagree

14. If you disagree or strongly disagree, please briefly share your reasons.

[FREE TEXT]

15. Are there any other concepts you think relevant to the Framework which could be provided as a definition to support built environment stakeholders?

[FREE TEXT]

16. To what extent do you agree with the definition of 'net biodiversity loss'?

Choose one:

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

17. To what extent do you agree with the use of this definition of 'no net biodiversity loss'?

Choose one:

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

18. To what extent do you agree with the definition of 'net positive'?

Choose one:

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

19. To what extent do you agree with the general definition of 'regenerative'?

Choose one:

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

20. To what extent do you agree with the general definition of 'regenerative design'?

Choose one:

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

21. To what extent do you agree that the graphics used to visualise each definition support understanding, reinforce clarity and prevent greenwashing?

Choose one:

Strongly agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly disagree

22. If you disagree or strongly disagree please briefly share your reasons.

[FREE TEXT]

23. Is there anything else you think should be included in this graphic to support industry alignment? If so please share your reasoning.

[FREE TEXT]

Section 4 - Scope for a nature positive built environment

In Part 3, Section 4, Pages 7 and 8 of this document, a diagram and associated text is presented which outlines key aspects of the scope.

24. To what extent do you agree that the scope diagram is clear and easy to follow?

Choose one:

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

25. To what extent do you agree that the diagram adequately depicts the scope of nature positive in the built environment?

Choose one:

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Section 5 - Principles for a nature positive built environment

In Part 3, Section 5, Page 9 of this document, Principles to follow for ensuring nature positive actions are presented.

26. To what extent do you agree that the Principles provide a clear framework for stakeholders in the built environment to work towards nature positive approaches?*

Choose one:

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

27. Please share any additional comments or feedback on the Principles you think could help better align actions to a nature positive approach.

[FREE TEXT]

Section 6 – Closing section

28. Do you agree that The Framework Definition will support industry clarity on the topic, avoid greenwashing and enable action?

Choose one:

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

29. If so, how? If not, please explain why.

[FREE TEXT]

30. How do you see yourself using this output? Please provide specific examples and how you could use them.

[FREE TEXT]

31. Please share any further feedback or comments on the Framework Definition.

[FREE TEXT]

32. Please share any other feedback/comments you might have here.

[FREE TEXT]