

PRE-SCREENING NOTIFICATION

Scottish Government version

SEA PRE-SCREENING DOCUMENT

Responsible Authority: Scottish Government

Title of the plan: First national Good Food Nation Plan

What prompted the plan:
(e.g. a legislative, regulatory or administrative provision)

Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act 2022, Section 1

“(1)The Scottish Ministers must—
(a)publish, and
(b)lay before the Scottish Parliament, a national good food nation plan.”

Plan subject:
(e.g. transport)

Food Policy

Brief summary of the plan:
(including the area or location to which the plan related)

The first national Good Food Nation (GFN) Plan presents an overarching vision and key outcomes for Scottish food policy. It also collates in one place relevant existing policies on food. It does not focus on a particular area of Scotland.

The plan is divided into three main sections.

Part 1 outlines the background to, and the practical implications of, the national GFN Plan.

Part 2 sets out the new overarching food related outcomes for a Good Food Nation in Scotland as well as existing targets and indicators and outlines future work to further develop targets and ways of measuring progress.

Part 3 collates work on food policy that is under way and sets out working mechanisms to ensure a cross policy approach to achieving the GFN outcomes becomes embedded in government working.

The following are the overarching outcomes:

- **Outcome 1:** Everyone in Scotland eats well with reliable access to safe, nutritious, affordable, sustainable, and age and culturally appropriate food.
- **Outcome 2:** Scotland’s food system is sustainable and contributes to a flourishing natural environment. It supports our net zero ambitions, and plays an important role in maintaining and improving animal welfare and in restoring and regenerating biodiversity.

SEA PRE-SCREENING DOCUMENT

- **Outcome 3:** Scotland's food system encourages a physically and mentally healthy population, leading to a reduction in diet-related conditions.
- **Outcome 4:** Our food and drink sector is prosperous, diverse, innovative and vital to national and local economic and social wellbeing. It is key to making Scotland food secure and food resilient and creates and sustains jobs and businesses underpinned by fair work standards.
- **Outcome 5:** Scotland has a thriving food culture with a population who are interested in and educated about good and sustainable food.
- **Outcome 6:** Scotland has a global reputation for high-quality food that we want to continue to grow. Decisions we make in Scotland contribute positively to local and global food systems transformation. We share and learn from best practice internationally.

Scottish Ministers, will have to have regard to the national GFN Plan when exercising specified functions. Relevant authorities (local authorities and health boards), will have to have regard to the national Plan when developing their own GFN Plans.

To ensure that the national Good Food Nation Plan applies to relevant policy areas, we must identify relevant policy areas and government activities - these are called specified functions. Scottish Ministers will have a legal requirement to have regard¹ to the national Good Food Nation Plan when they are carrying out these specified functions.

A specified function can be presented in two ways:

- A reference to existing legislation that outlines functions on relevant topics
- A description of activities and actions in relation to relevant topics.

¹ 'have regard' is a legal term meaning to take the relevant document into account and, if Scottish Ministers decide to depart from it, they must have and give clear reasons for doing so

SEA PRE-SCREENING DOCUMENT

Brief summary of the likely environmental consequences:

(including whether it has been determined that the plan is likely to have no or minimum effects, either directly or indirectly)

This first iteration of the national GFN plan has a mainly strategic purpose: to provide an overarching framework for future food policy across Scotland and to outline how food policy is going to become more coherent.

While we expect that the plan will have positive impacts on the environment by reducing the negative environmental consequences of the Scottish food system in the long run it is a) not possible to foresee the nature of such developments at this stage, and b) any such developments will be a result of other policies and strategies that would be subject to SEA consideration in their own right.

Existing policies that are included in the plan will have had to submit and conduct their own environmental and other relevant impact assessments.

Once the Plan is published, Scottish Ministers will be required to have regard to the Plan when exercising specified functions. This means that they need to take into account the national outcomes, including the aim to work towards a more sustainable food system and develop any new food related policies in a cross cutting way. We would expect this process to generate no impacts or positive impacts on the environment.

As part of exercising a specified function, Ministers may make decisions or develop new policies. These would be subject to the SEA process in the usual way.

Should the position with regards to the content of this plan change and new content be developed we will revisit this pre-screening and consider whether screening would be appropriate.

Brief summary of how environmental principles have been considered:

(including whether any of the guiding principles, as set out in section 13 of the Continuity Act, are relevant to the plan)

The Good Food Nation (Scotland) Act 2022 sets out particular requirements with regards to the environment that we have to consider when preparing the plan. This includes section 1(6) "In determining the content of the national good food nation plan so far as required by subsection (3), the Scottish Ministers must have regard to the scope for food-related issues to affect outcomes in relation to, among other things—

(b)the environment, including in particular in relation to—

(i)climate change, and

(ii)wildlife and the natural environment"

As well as section 2(b): " In preparing the national good food nation plan, the Scottish Ministers must have regard to — the role of a sustainable food system and supply chain in contributing to mitigation of climate change, halting and reversing of loss of biodiversity and improvement in animal welfare"

SEA PRE-SCREENING DOCUMENT

These requirements are reflected in Outcome 2: *Scotland's food system is sustainable and contributes to a flourishing natural environment. It supports our net zero ambitions, and plays an important role in maintaining and improving animal welfare and in restoring and regenerating biodiversity.*

Contact details:

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Date of opinion:

28 August 2023

When completed send to: SEA.gateway@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or to SEA Gateway, Scottish Government, Area 2H (South), Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ