

***Sent on behalf of National Museums Scotland***

23 March 2018

## **Post-legislative Scrutiny: Biodiversity and Biodiversity Reporting Duties**

### **Q1. How well do you believe public bodies understand the biodiversity and reporting duties placed upon them?**

National Museums Scotland is aware of the reporting duties and submitted a report in 2014. However, our impression is that in general there is an uneven level of understanding of the duties across many Public Bodies and a sense that the matter is of limited direct relevance to many Bodies.

### **Q2. Do you believe that public bodies are adequately resourced to comply with the biodiversity and reporting duties?**

No. The reporting requirements are out of proportion to the differing size and types of public sector bodies and the relevance of the matter to them. Therefore, for example, the obligation to produce a report takes up a disproportionate amount of resource for Public Bodies of our size and who have limited involvement in relation to biodiversity.

### **Q3. Do you think the requirement to report on the biodiversity duty leads to effective actions for improving and conserving biodiversity by public bodies?**

In general, we consider that the requirement has a limited impact.

We have reported on the areas we consider National Museums Scotland can contribute towards, however given the nature of functions and estate means that the opportunity to have direct impact is limited. This is an issue which is common to many Public Bodies.

### **Q4. Are there any changes that could improve the actions taken by public bodies in respect of the biodiversity and reporting duties?**

We consider it would be appropriate for the list of Public Bodies to whom the Duties apply to be reconsidered to focus on those Bodies to whom the Duties are more directly relevant.

In addition, if the list of Bodies remained as at present, it would be very beneficial if the reporting requirement and guidance were on a much more proportionate basis, appropriate for the different types and sizes of organisations including the option to provide a 'nil return' response.