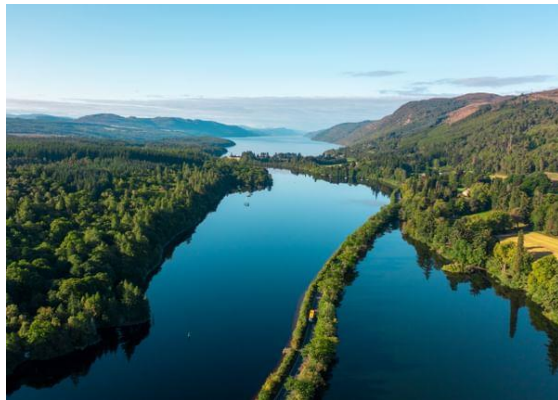

visit **Inverness**
Loch Ness



Climate Action Plan

June 2022

“We are the first generation to feel the effect of climate change and the last generation who can do something about it.”

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Executive Summary

“We are the first generation to feel the effect of climate change and the last generation who can do something about it.” – President Obama, 23rd Sept, 2014.

Visit Inverness Loch Ness's Sustainability Vision

It's not too late, we are the last generation able to do something to ensure our climate is safe for generations to come. Climate Action and Sustainability is at the forefront of the Inverness Loch Ness Destination. Working collaboratively with stakeholders across the destination we will ensure what we do going forward is in the best interests of our people, our visitors, and most importantly our environment.

We acknowledge the current IPCC advice stating the need to cut global carbon emission to 55% below 2017 levels by 2050 to keep the planet warming within 1.5 degrees. Inverness Loch Ness' Climate Action Plan will set out targets and guidance for those within the destination and those visiting to ensure our destination is open and enjoyable for generations to come. The CAP has been created by Visit Inverness Loch Ness, the official organization for the Inverness and Loch Ness tourism destination. The plan has been created with help from various stakeholders across the destination, without whom, this plan would not exist.

This plan explains how our destination will meet the five pathways of the Glasgow Declaration and will also showcase which sustainable development goals are being met and which ones are being targeted. This CAP helps the destination monitor, evaluate, and improve our environmental impact.

1.0 Introduction

This plan will outline how the destination, Inverness Loch Ness will carry out its Climate Action Plan using two declarations and how it could meet some of the sustainable development goals.

1.1 THE GLASGOW DECLARATION

The Glasgow Declaration was launched at COP26, with the objective to raise the climate ambition of tourism stakeholders and ensure strong actions to support the global commitment to halve emissions by 2030 and reach Net Zero as soon as possible before 2050. Tourism needs to act on climate issues to ensure the sustainability, competitiveness, and resilience of the sector. The declaration aims to lead and align climate action across tourism stakeholders, including all public and private sector organizations.

Once you become a signatory to the declaration there are a few things you must do:

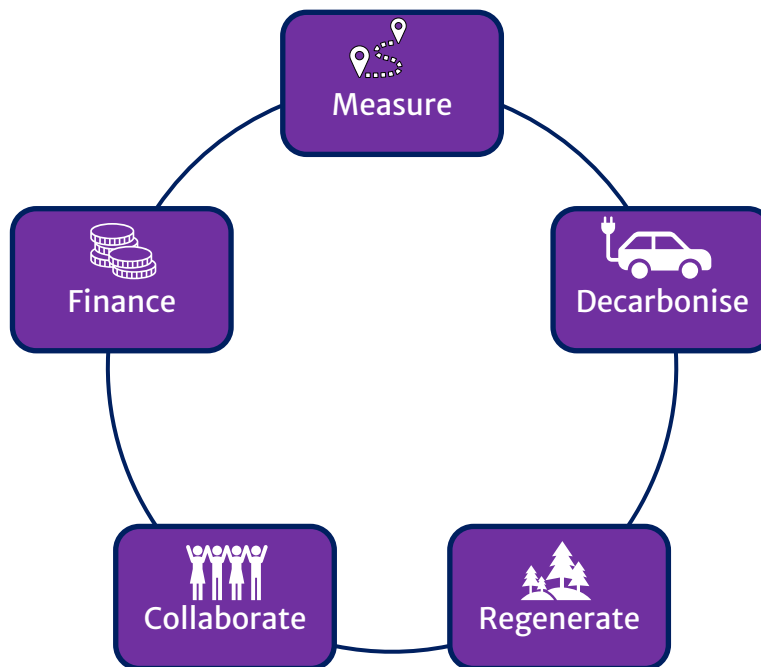
- Commit to delivering a climate action plan within 12 months of signing and implementing accordingly.
- If plans are already in place – commit to updating or implementing them in the same period to align with the declaration.
- Commit to report publicly both progress against interim and long-term targets, as well as the actions being taken, at least annually.
- Commit to report publicly at least annually, both for progress against interim and long-term targets, as well as the actions being taken.

Within our destination we commit to deliver our climate action plan within 12 months, Visit Inverness Loch Ness signed up in December 2021 and we commit to report publicly on our progress, we will aim to do this annually every April from 2023.








Glasgow Declaration
Climate Action in Tourism

To ensure climate action is aligned across all tourism, we agree on five shared pathways for our plans to follow.



These five pathways are explained in the table below.

<p>Measure</p> 	<p><i>Measure and disclose all travel and tourism-related emissions. Ensure our methodologies and tools are aligned to UNFCCC-relevant guidelines on measurement, reporting and verification, and that they are transparent and accessible.</i></p>
<p>Decarbonise</p> 	<p><i>Set and deliver targets aligned with climate science to accelerate tourism's decarbonisation. This includes transport, infrastructure, accommodation, activities, food & drink, and waste management. While offsetting may have a subsidiary role, it must be complementary to real reductions.</i></p>
<p>Regenerate</p> 	<p><i>Restore and protect ecosystems, supporting nature's ability to draw down carbon, as well as safeguarding biodiversity, food security, and water supply. As much of tourism is based in regions most immediately vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, ensure the sector can support affected and at-risk communities in resilience building, adaptation, and disaster response. Help visitors and host communities experience better balance with nature.</i></p>
<p>Collaborate</p> 	<p><i>Share evidence of risks and solutions with all stakeholders and our guests, and work together to ensure our plans are as effective and coordinated as possible. Strengthen governance and capacity for action at all levels, including national and sub-national authorities, civil society, large companies and SMEs, vulnerable groups, local communities and visitors.</i></p>
<p>Finance</p> 	<p><i>Ensure organisational resources and capacity are sufficient to meet objectives set out in climate plans, including the financing of training, research, and implementation of effective fiscal and policy tools where appropriate to accelerate transition.</i></p>

1.2 TOURISM DECLARES CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Tourism Declares launched on January 14th, 2020, with signatories from across the industry. With Climate Emergency Declarations taking place in other sectors, there was a need for a tourism-specific declaration that could bring together organizations and individuals from across the industry under a common goal.



Tourism Declares exists to enable everyone in the tourism sector to implement Climate Action Plans needed to halve sector emissions by 2030.

1.3 Sustainable Development Goals

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by all United Nations (UN) Member States in 2015, it provides a blueprint for peace and prosperity for our people and planet. There are 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's).

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Within our destinations CAP we have decided to work on a several of these SDG's, outlined below.



2.0 Destination Overview

Our destination: Inverness, Loch Ness is in the North of Scotland, just over 100 miles west of Aberdeen and 65 miles northeast of Fort William. Inverness is known as the Highland Capital and Loch Ness is home to Nessie the Loch Ness Monster. Our destination covers over 1200 square miles, from Cawdor in the North East to Dalchreichart in the South West.

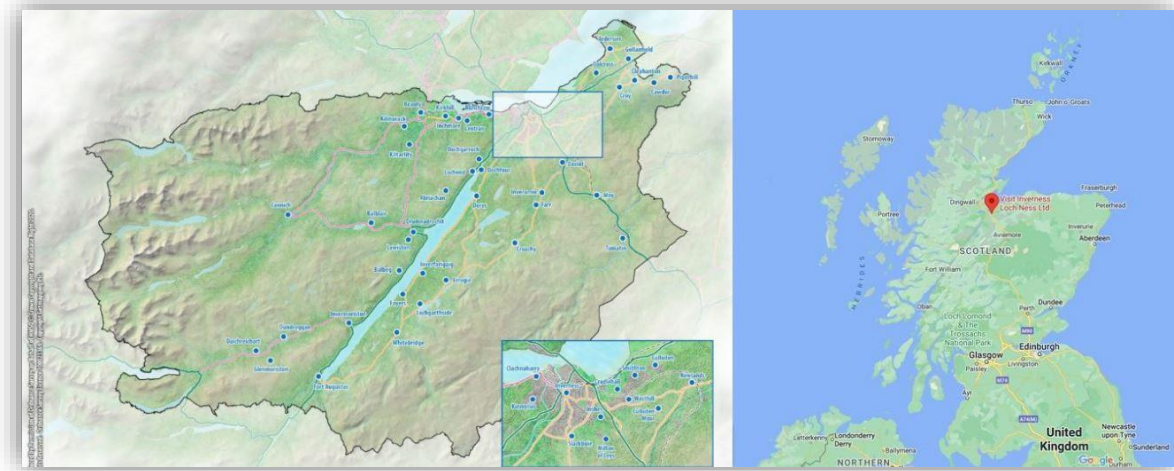


Figure 1 – Map of VILN Tourist Destination

2.1 VISIT INVERNESS LOCH NESS (VILN)

VILN aims to create a stronger and more sustainable destination for its diverse membership of over 470 tourism businesses, 44 communities and its visitors who are drawn from around the world. The organization became the first Tourism Business Improvement District (BID) in the UK when established in 2014. In 2022 the organization was named the first carbon neutral BID in the UK and has also signed the Glasgow Declaration: Climate Action in Tourism, and the Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency declaration in line with its sustainability goals. We maintain our carbon neutrality due to a partnership with Trees for Life, founded in 1993 are a charity focused on rewilding the Scottish Highlands. We measure our carbon footprint monthly and offset it on an annual basis.

2.2 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

This plan was initiated by Visit Inverness Loch Ness; however, it has been assisted by VisitScotland as part of their Destination Climate Action Plan Pilot Programme which VILN was successful to applying. As part of this programme, we have been assisted by the Travel Foundation in developing a planning worksheet which has been the backbone to our destinations overall Climate Action Plan. We were also fortunate to have several stakeholders join us for our meetings throughout the programme. The stakeholders came from several different tourist sectors including accommodation, local authority, activity providers and water transport providers. The initial discussions of various ideas resulted in the planning which has also been discussed with the team at VILN.

3.0 Climate Actions and Targets

Our actions and targets are categorized under the five Glasgow declaration pathways, and some are linked to Sustainable Development Goals. This section presents our actions and targets. We are delighted to share that of these targets presented we already have five quick wins, one of each from each pathway. These include the development of our sustainability section on our website which is ongoing, our trees for tees target of 125 has been surpassed after 152 participants opted for a tree instead of a tee at our Loch Ness Challenge. In March 2022 we promoted 21 jobs throughout the month, which allowed us to achieve the first target of the local employment action. Visit Inverness Loch Ness will now include sustainability within its Business Development Subgroup, the first of which meeting will occur mid-April 2022. Finally, VILN has rolled out its community grant to five successful applicants, we look forward to seeing how these projects progress throughout the year.

3.1 MEASUREMENT

Action	Target	SDG's
Measure our visitor numbers and impacts	Monitor and record numbers.	SDG 12 – Responsible Consumption and Production
Offsetting scheme	10 businesses/year	SDG 13 – Climate action
Create sustainability section on VILN website.	Develop by July 2022.	

Measurement – Summary of actions and targets

Measure our visitor numbers and impacts. VILN will continue to measure our visitor numbers and impacts (incl. waste management) through the Loch Ness Ranger we have employed, this will be monitored annually. We hope to deliver a destination-wide method for offsetting carbon emissions, if successful we will roll this out to businesses and for the first year, we have a target of 10 businesses per year which will be recorded quarterly. VILN will create a sustainability section on their website and once developed it will include a filter of green businesses within our destination, allowing visitors easier access to our green members. We hope to have this in place by July 2022.

3.2 DECARBONISE

Action	Target	SDG
VILN Carbon Footprint	Monitor and record numbers.	SDG 13 – Climate Action
Sustainable stays	Monitor and record.	SDG 11 – Sustainable cities and communities
Workcation	Monitor and record.	SDG 8 – Decent Work & Growth
Trees for Tees	125/year	
Partnerships	Monitor and record numbers.	SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals
Potential Climate Action Reward	3/year	SDG 13 – Climate Action

Decarbonise – Summary of actions and targets

At VILN we track our organizations carbon footprint monthly, recording our energy usage, transport related emissions and website data. Following a full year of carbon footprint tracking we will offset our emissions with our partnership with Trees for Life, with whom we share a corporate grove. Through our marketing we will promote sustainable stays and workcations, working with influencers, our members, and stakeholders to deliver a sustainable holiday outlook for our visitors. VILN is hosting a sporting challenge around Loch Ness in May 2022, participants have been offered a tree for a tee to enable them to reduce their consumption and instead provide forestation on the banks of Loch Ness. Within the first year of trees for tees we hope 125 participants will take up the initiative. VILN will continue to monitor and records its partnership inclusion and promotion, this will be tracked quarterly. We will explore the potential to have a climate action related award at

events and throughout our membership, we hope in the first year to give this out to 3 people/organizations should it be successful.

3.3 REGENERATE

Action	Target	SDG
Trees for Life/VILN	Donate 20 trees/year	
Local employment	5/month	SDG8 – Decent work & growth
Reduce, reuse, recycle	5/year	SDG 12 – Responsible consumption and production
Biodiversity	3/year	SDG 15 – Life on Land, SDG 14 – Life below water

Regenerate – Summary of actions and targets

VILN will continue its partnership with trees for life and donate at least 20 trees per year in this current plan and will be tracked annually. We will promote local employment through our newsletter, where we currently have a section on job opportunities, this will be tracked quarterly, and we hope to achieve 5 job mentions per month. In all VILN’s activities and events we aim to reduce, reuse, and recycle everything we have, for example we have recycled t-shirts at our Loch Ness Challenge in May and hope to have other initiatives throughout the year. This will be tracked Annually. We hope to improve biodiversity within our area, we hope to achieve this through having various biodiversity projects, one we currently have is providing new forestry near the South Loch Ness trail which we help maintain. Within our first year we hope to have 3 projects on biodiversity started.

3.4 COLLABORATE

Action	Target	SDG
Community engagement	10/year	SDG 11 – Sustainable cities and communities
Sustainability engagement	3/month	SDG 13 – Climate Action
Climate Action Education	5/year	SDG 13 – Climate Action
Sustainability best practice	10/year	SDG 13 – Climate Action
Include Sustainability in VILN Subgroup	Monitor	SDG 13 – Climate Action

Collaborate – Summary of actions and targets

Throughout our work we will aim to have engagement with 10 communities a year. VILN will also aim to have sustainability engagements three times per month, whether that be sustainability meetings with stakeholders, sustainability events or marketing of sustainability, examples of these will be tracked quarterly. VILN hopes to host five sessions of climate action education per year, whether this be training, workshops, or general advice, it will be tracked annually. We will feature sustainability best practice examples within our newsletter within the first year we hope to feature ten of these, and this will be monitored quarterly. Finally, VILN hopes to include sustainability within discussions the Business Development Subgroup.

3.5 FINANCE

Action	Target	SDG
VILN Community Grant	3/Year	SDG 11 – Sustainable cities and communities
Funding schemes	20 mentions/year	
Shared initiatives	5/year	SDG 17 – Partnership for the goals.
Continue employment of Destination Sustainability Coordinator	Monitor	
Application advice	5/year	

Finance – Summary of actions and targets

VILN has launched a community tourism grant aimed at making the destination and visitor experience more sustainable, in its first year we hope to support three projects, this will be tracked annually. Within our newsletter we often mention funding schemes that are available to our members, we aim to have 20 mentions per year within this current plan. We hope to share initiatives and projects with at least 5 different organizations/members throughout the year. VILN will continue to employ its Destination Sustainability Coordinator (DSC). Finally, we will offer support and guidance to our members by aiding them in applications advice on any sustainability matters, this could include installing solar panels etc. and we hope to support 5 businesses in our first year. With exception to the VILN Community grant and employment of DSC these actions and targets will be tracked quarterly.

3.6 MEASURING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Within this climate action plan, we hope our destination will achieve 7 of the sustainable development goals mentioned. Some of the Glasgow Declaration Pathway Goals have been aligned with some SDG's and their progress will be monitored throughout the process. We hope to achieve SDG's 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 and most importantly 17 by the end of this CAP.

4.0 Implementations & Monitoring

The reporting period is the time in which the goals and targets will be tracked, within this plan this will be between May 2022–April 2023. The aim is to have the goals mentioned in 3.1 completed by March 31st, 2023, two weeks prior to the annual progress report which will be published by 10th April 2023. Following feedback and consultation the second climate action plan will be published in time for the new financial year with aimed release on 1st May 2023. Continuous monitoring will also occur throughout the reporting period and results will be featured in the annual progress report.

During the reporting period all goals and targets will be treated as Key Performance Indicators (KPI's). These KPI's will be monitored throughout the year and will be reported on a quarterly basis. Tracking will take place in the form of an excel spreadsheet which will be updated quarterly as part of the reporting progress.

The monitoring of the SDG's will be ongoing, and these goals will also be included within the spreadsheet mentioned previously.