

Rural Affairs and Islands Committee  
Wednesday 11 June 2025  
20th Meeting, 2025 (Session 6)

# Proposal for a National Park in Galloway and Ayrshire

## Introduction

1. The Rural Affairs and Islands Committee has agreed to take evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands regarding the Scottish Government's decision not to proceed with plans to designate a third national park in south-west Scotland.
2. The decision followed a 14-week consultation exercise carried out by NatureScot, who were appointed as a statutory reporter to advise the Scottish Government on the proposal. [NatureScot submitted its report on the proposal to Scottish Ministers on 5 May and this was subsequently published on 29 May.](#)
3. In its report, NatureScot explained that “our assessment and our analysis of the issues and of the range of views expressed during the consultation suggests that the proposal has not garnered sufficient support locally to proceed”. It went on to state that—

“Our recommendation as Reporter is therefore not to proceed with the designation but instead to strengthen a range of existing arrangements, including a better resourced and more influential Galloway and Southern Ayrshire Biosphere Reserve, a renewed focus on people and nature alongside commercial forestry operations in the Galloway Forest Park and a new commitment to the implementation of management strategies for the three National Scenic Areas”.
4. The Cabinet Secretary made the announcement on the decision when delivering [a statement on the proposal to Parliament on 29 May.](#) [The Cabinet Secretary also wrote to the RAI Committee to inform it of this decision shortly afterwards.](#)

Clerks to the Committee  
June 2025