

**European Community Directive
on the Conservation of Natural Habitats
and of Wild Fauna and Flora
(92/43/EEC)**

**Second Report by the United Kingdom under
Article 17**

**on the implementation of the Directive
from January 2001 to December 2006**

Conservation status assessment for :

**H8120: Calcareous and calcshist screes of the
montane to alpine levels (*Thlaspietea rotundifolii*)**

Please note that this is a section of the report. For the complete report visit <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/article17>

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H8120 Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels (*Thlaspietea rotundifolii*)

Audit trail compiled and edited by JNCC and the UK statutory nature conservation agencies Upland Lead Co-ordination Network.

This paper and accompanying appendices contain background information and data used to complete the standard EC reporting form (Annex D), following the methodology outlined in the commission document “Assessment, monitoring and reporting under Article 17 of the Habitats Directive, Explanatory Notes and Guidelines, Final Draft 5; October 2006”. The superscript numbers below cross-reference to the headings in the corresponding Annex D reporting form. This supporting information should be read in conjunction with the UK approach for habitats (see ‘Assessing Conservation Status: UK Approach’).

1. National-biogeographic level information

1.1 General description and correspondance with National Vegetation Classification (NVC) and other habitat types

Table 1.1.1 provides a summary description of H8120 and its relations with UK classifications.

Scree habitats consist of rock fragments covering the frost-shattered summits of mountains or accumulating on slopes below cliffs. Calcareous and calcshist screes consist of base-rich rocks including limestone, calcareous-schists and the more basic igneous rocks, such as serpentine and basalt. They may occur at any altitude, but screes in the lowlands are excluded from the Annex I definition. The scree is colonised by a range of pioneer species and provides shelter for many species sensitive to frost or grazing. Similar species may be found in the habitat known as ‘fell field’. Screes in the UK provide a habitat for various plant communities with affinities to the *Thlaspietalia rotundifolii* described from continental Europe. Both Calcareous and calcshist screes and 8110 Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels are important for their rich fern flora and act as refugia for a number of rare species.

The vegetation consists of assemblages of calcicole and basiphilous species, the composition of which is heavily influenced by altitude. Characteristic species at high altitude include purple saxifrage *Saxifraga oppositifolia*, holly-fern *Polystichum lonchitis* and alpine meadow-grass *Poa alpina*, while at lower altitude limestone fern *Gymnocarpium robertianum*, herb-robert *Geranium robertianum* and wall lettuce *Mycelis muralis* are more usual. A large number of calcicolous mosses occur in the habitat type. Some low-lying examples are referable to NVC type OV38 *Gymnocarpium robertianum* – *Arrhenatherum elatius*. OV40 *Asplenium viride* – *Cystopteris fragilis* community is usually associated with rock crevices but is occasionally developed in scree. Other forms of calcareous and calcshist scree vegetation are not described by the NVC.

This habitat type may occur in close association with Annex I type 8210 Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation, or grade to other Annex I types where the scree is stable.

Table 1.1.1 Summary description of habitat H8120 and its relations with UK vegetation/habitat classifications

Classification	Correspondence with Annex I type	Comments
EU Interpretation Manual	PAL.CLASS.: 61.2	Based on CORINE classifications.
NVC	OV38 <i>Gymnocarpium robertianum</i> – <i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i> .	This Annex I type includes screes of calcareous or other base-rich rocks, generally found at high altitude. It grades to other Annex I types where the scree is stable. It also includes a variety of other plant communities not covered by the NVC. It may be closely associated with Annex I type 8210 Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation. (Appendix II Jackson and McLeod 2002).
BAP priority habitat type	Proposed new BAP priority habitat - inland rock outcrops and scree habitats.	A broader category which will entirely include H8120.
CSM reporting categories, for: feature types; ASSI/SSSI feature types	Limestone pavement, inland cliffs and screes (See Williams 2006 www.jncc.gov.uk/page-3520)	A broader category which covers the following Annex I feature types: H6130 Calaminarian grasslands of the <i>Violetalia calaminariae</i> H8120 Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels (<i>Thlaspietea rotundifolii</i>) H8210 Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation H8310 Caves not open to the public H6430 Hydrophilous tall herb fringe communities of plains and of the montane to alpine levels H8240 Limestone pavements H8220 Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation H8110 Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (<i>Androsacetalia alpinae</i> and <i>Galeopsietalia ladani</i>)
JNCC CSM Guidance feature types	Calcareous scree (JNCC 2005b www.jncc.gov.uk/page-2237)	Close correspondence to H8120 Calcareous and calcshist screes of the montane to alpine levels (<i>Thlaspietea rotundifolii</i>).

2. Range ^{2.3}

2.1 Current range

Range surface area ^{2.3.1}: **6,811 km²**

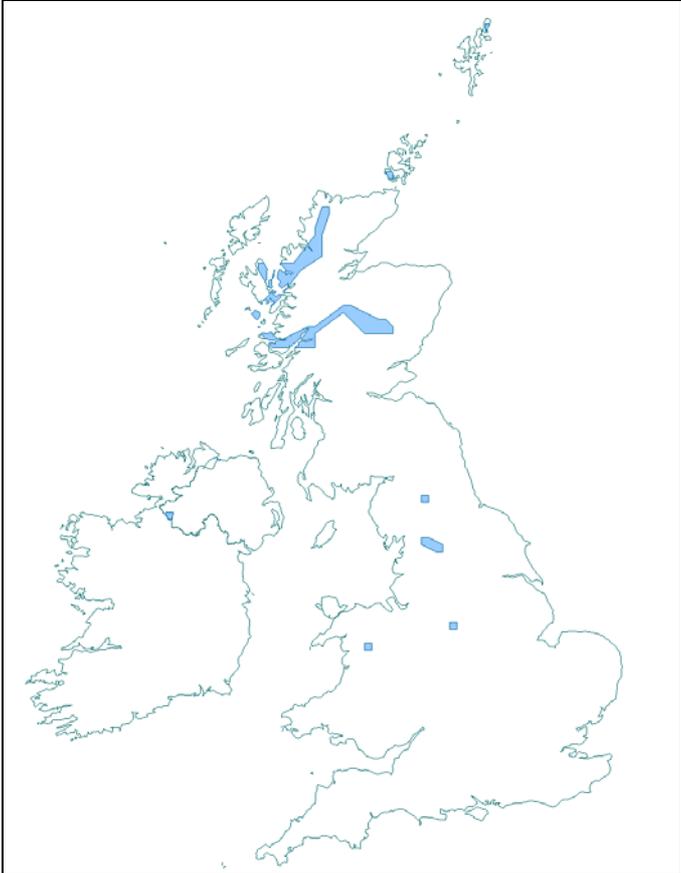
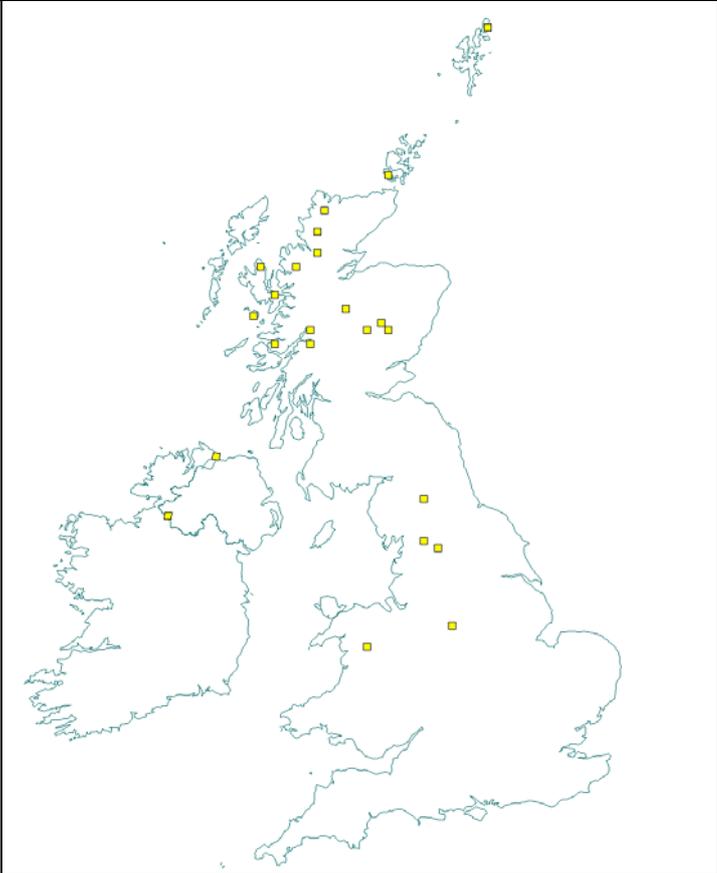
Date calculated ^{2.3.2}: **May 2007**

Quality of data ^{2.3.3}: **Poor**

The surface area estimate was calculated within alpha hull software, using extent of occurrence as a proxy measure for range (see Map 2.1.1). The value of alpha was set at 25 km; the alpha was clipped to include inland areas only.

Maps 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 show the range and distribution of H8120 in the UK. This habitat type is widely distributed in the uplands of the UK, but is local in its occurrence (Jackson and McLeod 2002) and is the rarest of the upland rock habitats in the UK. Stands tend to be small and local. Data needs to be collated on possible examples outside the SAC series. None are known at present.

Although not mapped in Map 2.1.2 the habitat is likely to be developed on basalt scree or fell-field on Mull and on calcareous schist screes in the Breadalbanes. However, these are likely to give only a few more examples in perhaps four or five 10 km squares.

Map 2.1.1 Habitat range map ^{1.1} for H8120	Map 2.1.2 Habitat distribution map ^{1.2} for H8120
	
<p>Range envelope shown in blue/grey shade in above map is a minimum convex polygon constructed using JNCC Alpha Shapes tool (see Technical Note I for details of methodology).</p>	<p>Each yellow square represents a 10x10-km square of the National Grid and shows the known and/or predicted occurrence of this habitat. 10 km Square Count: 23</p>

2.2 Trend in range since c.1994

Trend in range^{2.3.4}: Stable
Trend magnitude^{2.3.5}: Not applicable
Trend period^{2.3.6}: 1994-2006
Reasons for reported trend^{2.3.7}: Not applicable

There is little quantitative information available on trends in range in the UK for H8120, and particularly since 1994. The habitat is also poorly known outside the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) series. However, expert judgement suggests that the range since 1994 is likely to be stable as geological restrictions, natural erosion and rockfall are unlikely to create calcareous or calcschist scree in new areas outside the current range: the processes which have created the habitat historically are still operating in suitable locations within the surface area of the range shown in Map 2.1.1.

Since there is no evidence of significant scree removal in the uplands, and a possibility of fresh calcareous and calcschist scree creation by rockfall, soil erosion and heavy grazing, the habitat may be assumed to be increasing or stable. The effect on range may be small since the processes will mostly act in areas of existing scree and are unlikely to create new areas of scree outside the current range.

2.3 Favourable reference range

Favourable reference range^{2.5.1}: 6,811 km²

Section 3.2.1.3 of 'Assessing Conservation Status: UK Approach' sets out how favourable reference range estimates for habitats have been determined in the UK. Based on this approach, the current surface area, 6,811 km², has been set as the favourable reference area. Reasons for this are discussed below.

Map 2.1.2 is considered likely to be a good representation of both the current and potential distribution of H8220. The habitat is also likely to be developed on some sites outside the SAC series, particularly on basalt scree or fell-field on Mull and on calcareous schist screes in the Breadalbanes; however, these are likely to give only a few more examples in perhaps four or five 10 km squares.

The natural range is limited by the occurrence of suitable calcareous/calcschist geology and particular geomorphological processes (principally rockfalls) in the uplands of the UK. Beyond the stated gaps in knowledge, there is no potential for increase in the natural range of the habitat in the UK as present day rockfalls are most likely to fall into existing areas of scree. Natural processes since the end of the Ice Age may be expected to have greatly reduced the area of scree by vegetation and soils developing to cover the rock. Currently such processes may be relatively slow, localised and small scale, though large rockfalls, creating large areas of fresh scree do occasionally occur.

In Scotland there are no known factors that may have contracted the potential range. Physical removal of upland scree is not known as a significant factor in Scotland. The main factors impacting on scree is grazing by large herbivores and invasion by trees and shrubs and the spread of non-native species. Some areas of calcareous scree at lower levels e.g. basalt scree on Mull, may be covered in native woodland or scrub, a valuable habitat in its own right. A similar situation is thought to exist for the resource on England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Heavy grazing may remove or suppress characteristic species but does not destroy the habitat itself. Invasion by native trees and shrubs tends to occur only locally in the uplands and is probably not a major factor leading to loss of this habitat. The spread of non-native plants especially New Zealand Willow Herb *Epilobium brunnei* is a factor in the moister, mainly westerly scree but affects the condition rather than the range of the habitat.

Consequently the known distribution of H8120 shown in Map 2.1.2 is likely to be occupying most of its potential natural range and is viable. Expert judgement is that favourable reference range and distribution for H8120 is likely to match closely the current range and distribution.

2.4 Conclusions on range

Conclusion^{2.6.i}: Favourable

There is no empirical information on any changes in range for H8120 since 1994, nor any previous historical data on extent or changes. Although H8120 is a dynamic habitat, natural change affecting the range operates on geological timescales and human activities are unlikely to have reduced the range of the habitat at a UK scale. Expert opinion suggests that the current range for H8120 is similar to that in 1994 at a UK scale. The current range for H8120 is considered to be close to the potential range for the habitat and to its favourable reference range, and so the judgement on range for H8120 is Favourable.

3. Area^{2.4}

3.1 Current area

Total UK extent^{2.4.1}: 6.73km²

Date of estimation^{2.4.2}: May 2007

Method^{2.4.3}: 1 = only or mostly based on expert opinion

Quality of data^{2.4.4}: **Poor**

Table 3.1.1 provides information on the area of H8120 in the UK.

In Scotland, little is known about the habitat other than the information on SAC area. The range of values given in Table 3.1.1 is an expert judgement as no further data are available on the area of H8120 beyond the area on SACs. The median value has been used as the basis for calculations in other parts of this audit trail.

Table 3.1.1 Area of H8120 in the UK

	Area (ha)	Method ^{2.4.3}	Quality of data ^{2.4.4}
England	300-500 (400)	1	Poor
Scotland	100-200 (150)	1	Poor
Wales	<100 (100)	1	Poor
Northern Ireland	20 +/- 5 (23)	1	Poor
Total UK extent ^{2.4.1}	515-825 (673)	1	Poor

Method used to estimate the habitat surface area: 1 = only or mostly based on expert opinion; 2 = based on remote sensing data; 3 = ground based survey. Only the most relevant class is given if more than one applies.

Key to reliability of measure/estimate: 1 = Precise measure of total extent/population size; 2 = Measure based on inventory data; 3 = Estimate calculated from different data sources and/or incomplete inventory data; 4 = Estimate based on expert opinion.

Quality of habitat surface area data: 'Good' e.g. based on extensive surveys; 'Moderate' e.g. based on partial data with some extrapolation; 'Poor' e.g. based on very incomplete data or on expert judgement.

3.2 Trend in area since c.1994

Trend in area^{2.4.5}: **Stable**
Trend magnitude^{2.4.6}: **Not applicable**
Trend period^{2.4.7}: **1994-2006**
Reasons for reported trend^{2.4.8}: **Not applicable**

There is no readily available quantitative evidence or information on any trend in area for H8120 since 1994. While there is some suggestion that there may be localised increases in area due to heavy grazing removing vegetation from stabilised slopes and promoting scree formation, expert opinion is that the extent of the habitat has remained stable at a UK level since 1994.

3.3 Favourable reference area

Favourable reference area^{2.5.2}: **6.7km²**

Section 3.2.2.3 of 'Assessing Conservation Status: UK Approach' sets out how favourable reference area estimates have been determined in the UK. Based on this approach, the current extent, which is approximately 6.7 km², has been set as the favourable reference area. Reasons for this are discussed below.

The potential area of H8120 is naturally limited by the occurrence of specific geological and geomorphological conditions. Natural processes such as rockfall can create new calcareous and calcshist scree; heavy grazing and trampling by grazing animals may help to maintain areas of scree or facilitate the development of new scree. Natural removal of the Annex I habitat through colonisation by vegetation and soils balances against these processes, but it is not known whether loss and gain of extent of the habitat is in balance. The prevailing high numbers of animals in the UK uplands more generally may have extended the extent of scree by facilitating vegetation and soil erosion.

The particular environmental conditions required for H8120 also mean that the habitat naturally has both a small total UK extent and is also naturally fragmented. Human impacts on the extent of the overall resource of H8120 are similarly small and localised.

There is no readily available information on the historic area of H8120 before 1994.

Overall, expert judgement is that the current area and distribution of H8120 is likely to closely equate to the potential natural area and be viable; and that this is likely to equate to the favourable reference area for H8120.

3.4 Conclusions on area covered by habitat

Conclusion^{2.6.ii}: Favourable

The extent and distribution of H8120 is dictated principally by a balance between specific geological and geomorphological conditions creating the habitat; grazing which can both maintain and create new habitat; and the creation of soils and colonisation by vegetation that can lead to its loss. The habitat extent is only locally affected by human activities. There is no known trend in area since 1994 and the current area, patch size and distribution is both considered viable and likely to equate to favourable reference area at a UK level.

4. Specific structures and functions (including typical species)

4.1 Main pressures^{2.4.10}

The following list of main pressures for H8120 has been derived from the six year Common Standards Monitoring (CSM) results for SACs designated for their representation of H8120:

- **Grazing (140 Grazing)**

Overgrazing, may reduce the floristic diversity of scree but some grazing is necessary to maintain open screes, preventing scrub or woodland regeneration.

- **Invasive species (954 Invasion by a species)**

The spread of non-native plants especially New Zealand Willow Herb *Epilobium brunnei* is a factor in the moister, mainly westerly scree

- **Air pollution (702 Air pollution)**

Based on an assessment of relevant literature and exceedence of critical loads (see Technical Note III), this habitat is not considered sensitive to air pollution or there is no relevant critical load available and the judgement is that it is unlikely to be at risk anyway.

4.2 Current condition

4.2.1 CSM condition assessments

Condition assessments based on CSM (see www.jncc.gov.uk/page-2199) provide a means to assess the structure and functioning of H8120 in the UK. The following attributes were examined for all CSM assessments relevant to the habitat:

- Feature (habitat) extent.
- Vegetation composition: frequency of taxa which are indicators of favourable condition; cover of taxa which are indicators of favourable condition, and others which are indicators of unfavourable condition.
- Vegetation structure: growth stages, burning, grazing, and disturbance.
- Physical structure: ground disturbance.

SAC condition assessments

SACs include about 74% (484 ha) (see Technical Note II) of the extent of H8120 in the UK in a well dispersed network across its range.

Table 4.2.1 and Map 4.2.1 summarise the CSM condition assessments for UK SACs supporting habitat H8120. These data were collated in January 2007. The maps give an impression of the overall spread of where unfavourable and favourable sites exist (summary statistics for the map are given in Section 7.2). The combined assessments show that of the SACs assessed:

- 39% of the area and 40% of the number of assessments was unfavourable; and
- at least 27% of the total UK habitat area was in unfavourable condition.

Table 4.2.1 CSM condition assessment results for UK SACs supporting H8120. See notes below table for details. Information on the coverage of these results is given in Section 7.2

Condition	Condition sub-categories	Area (ha)	Number of site features
Unfavourable	Declining		
	No change	32	1
	Unclassified	27	1
	Recovering	121	2
	Total	180	4
	<i>% of all assessments</i>	39%	40%
	<i>% of total UK resource</i>	27%	unknown
Favourable	Maintained	275	5
	Recovered		
	Unclassified	03	1
	Total	278	6
	<i>% of all assessments</i>	61%	60%
	<i>% of total UK resource</i>	41%	unknown

Notes

1. Data on features that have been partly-destroyed have been excluded from this table because they are not relevant to the consideration of present condition.
2. The data included are from CSM assessments carried out between April 1998 and December 2006. NB: these include additional and some up-date data from those used in the six year report produced by JNCC. (Williams, J.M., ed. 2006. *Common Standards Monitoring for Designated Sites: First Six Year Report*. Peterborough, JNCC).
3. Only assessments made for qualifying interest features on SAC have been included in this analysis.
4. Area figures for CSM assessments have been calculated using the data presented on the standard Natura 2000 data forms submitted to the EU.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)/Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) condition assessments

Not used.

Current Condition of H8120 based on CSM condition assessments (See Sections 4.2 and 7.2 for further information)		
Map 4.2.1 SAC assessments	Map 4.2.2 Assessments strongly indicative of the condition on SSSI/ASSIs	Map 4.2.3 Assessments weakly indicative of the condition on SSSI/ASSIs
	Not used	Not used
<p>Key</p> <p><u>Red</u> = unfavourable, i.e. the square contains at least one SAC where this habitat feature is present and has been judged to be unfavourable</p> <p><u>Green</u> = favourable, i.e. the square contains at least one SAC where this habitat feature is present and has been assessed as favourable but there are no unfavourable SAC features</p> <p><u>Blue</u> = SAC not assessed, i.e. the square contains at least one SAC supporting this habitat feature but no assessment has been reported</p> <p><u>Transparent</u> = SAC feature not present, i.e. the square does not contain any SAC features of this habitat type</p>	<p>Key*</p> <p><u>Green</u> – 80 – 100% of assessed features on 10-km square are favourable</p> <p><u>Yellow</u> - 50 – 80% of assessed features on 10-km square are favourable</p> <p><u>Orange</u> - 20 – 50% of assessed features on 10-km square are favourable</p> <p><u>Red</u> - 0 – 20% of assessed features on 10-km square are favourable</p> <p>*This is the same key as was used for JNCC CSM Report 2006</p>	

4.3 Typical species

Typical species^{2.5.3}: **None**

Typical species assessment^{2.5.4}: **Not applicable**

There are no species listed as characteristic of this habitat in the EU Interpretation Manual or through analyses of NVC constancy tables which are particularly faithful to this habitat.

4.4 Conclusions on specific structures and functions (including typical species)

Conclusion^{2.6.iii}: **Unfavourable - Bad but improving**

The EC Guidance states that where “more than 25% of the area of the habitat is unfavourable as regards its specific structures and functions”, the conclusion should be Unfavourable – Bad. In the UK this was generally taken to mean that more than 25% of the habitat area is in unfavourable condition.

CSM data for 2000-2006 for SACs supporting H8120 suggest that 40% of the number of assessed SACs supporting H8120, and 39% of the assessed SAC area (equivalent to 27% of the UK total area for H8110) were unfavourable.

Most of the known extent of H8120 is found on SACs, so extrapolating these trends to the wider resource of H8120 suggests that more than 25% of the overall UK resource is likely to be in unfavourable condition. However, around 26% of the assessed SAC area is recovering and none is declining, suggesting a general improvement in the condition of H8120 in these sites. Consequently a judgement of Unfavourable - Bad but improving is justified.

5. Future prospects

5.1 Main factors affecting the habitat

5.1.1 Conservation measures

- Protection within SACs

The majority of the known resource of H8120 lies within SACs with management measures specifically aimed at maintaining and enhancing the features for which they are designated, and to address some of the pressures listed within Section 4.1 and the future threats listed in Section 5.1.2.

An unknown but smaller proportion of the resource of H8120 also lies within the SSSI/ASSI series where similar management measures are in place.

- Agri-environment measures

A suite of agri-environment measures are now in place in both the uplands and lowlands which are addressing more appropriate management, particularly grazing levels, for much of the resource of H8120, particularly within the statutory site series.

- UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)

H8120 has been put forward as part of a new priority habitat type - inland rock outcrop and scree habitats. However it is not currently covered by any priority habitat action plan under the UK BAP.

5.1.2 Main future threats^{2.4.11}

The most obvious major future threats to H8120 are listed below, several of which are referred to in Section 4.1. The measures identified in Section 5.1.1 are addressing some of these factors, with a greater proportion being addressed within the statutory site series:

- **Grazing (140 Grazing)**

In some areas calcareous/calcschist scree may start to become more vegetated in future years if grazing levels fall under agri-environment schemes and/or Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) changes. This should not be of initial concern (as increases in valuable habitat from currently degraded scree may occur) but it will be important to monitor the affect of increased vegetation cover, and it may require the identification of those key areas of scree that should be kept open.

- **Invasive species (954 Invasion by a species)**

- **Air pollution**

Based on an assessment of relevant literature and exceedence of critical loads (see Technical Note III), this habitat is not considered sensitive to air pollution or there is no relevant critical load available and the judgement is that it is unlikely to be at risk anyway.

- **Climate change (750 Other pollution or human impacts/ activities)**

Based on the literature review (Technical Note IV) climate change is considered a major threat to the future condition of this habitat especially in the long term. However, there is a high degree of uncertainty in defining future climate threats on habitats and species due to uncertainty in: future greenhouse gas emissions; the consequential changes in climatic features (for instance temperature, precipitation CO₂ concentrations); the responses of habitats and species to these changes (for instance location, phenology, community structure) and the role of other socio-economic drivers of environmental change. The scale of change in habitats and species as a result of climate change will vary across ecosystems. Small changes in the climate are more likely to have a substantial impact on habitats and species which exist within a narrow range of environmental conditions. The future impacts of climate change on UK biodiversity will be exacerbated when coupled with other drivers of environmental change.

5.2 Future condition (as regards range, area covered and specific structures and functions)

5.2.1 CSM condition assessments

The CSM condition assessments reported in Sections 4.2.1-2 provide a basis to predict the potential future condition of H8120 in the UK. This involved treating all assessments currently identified as either favourable or unfavourable recovering as future-favourable: remaining categories were treated as future-unfavourable – see Table 5.2.1. There are a number of caveats to this approach, which are set out beneath this table.

SAC condition assessments

Table 5.2.1 and Map 5.2.1 summarise the predicted potential future condition of H8120 on UK SACs. This is based on the approach described above. The maps give an impression of the overall spread of where future-unfavourable and future-favourable sites are predicted to occur (summary statistics for the map are given in Section 7.2). The combined assessments show that of the SACs assessed:

- 87% of the area and 80% of the number of assessments fall within the future-favourable category; and
- at least 60% of the total UK habitat area falls within the future-favourable category.

Table 5.2.1 Predicted future condition of UK SACs supporting H8120 based on current CSM condition assessments. See notes below table for details. Information on the coverage of these results is given in Section 7.2

Future condition	Present condition	Area (ha)	Number of site features
Future-unfavourable	Unfavourable declining		
	Unfavourable no change	32	1
	Unfavourable unclassified	27	1
	Total	59	2
	<i>% of assessments</i>	13%	20%
	<i>% of total UK extent</i>	9%	Unknown
Future-favourable	Favourable maintained	275	5
	Favourable recovered		
	Unfavourable recovering	121	2
	Favourable unclassified	03	1
	Total	399	8
	<i>% of assessments</i>	87%	80%
	<i>% of total UK extent</i>	60%	Unknown

Note that the scenario presented above is based on the same information as used to construct the Table in section 4.1. It is based on the following premises:

- (i) the unfavourable-recovering condition assessments will at some point in the future become favourable;
- (ii) all unfavourable-unclassified sites will remain unfavourable, which is probably overly pessimistic;
- (iii) sympathetic management will be sustained on sites already classified as favourable and these will not be seriously damaged by any unforeseen events.

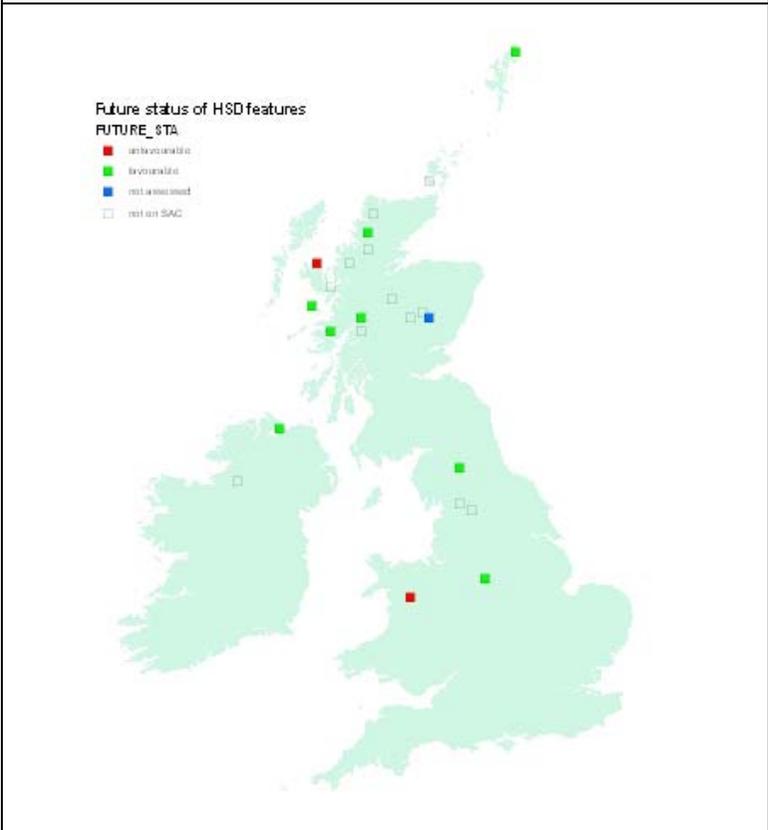
IMPORTANT NOTE: We do not have information on the timescale of the predicted recovery, which may be influenced by many past, natural and human related factors. A sustained, sympathetic management regime is more likely to result in 'favourable' condition being attained.

5.2.2. SSSI/ASSI condition assessments

Not used.

Predicted Future Condition of H8120 based on CSM condition assessments (See Sections 5.2 and 7.2 for further information on these maps)

Map 5.2.1 SAC assessments	Map 5.2.2 Assessments strongly indicative of the condition on SSSI/ASSIs	Map 5.2.3 Assessments weakly indicative of the condition on SSSI/ASSIs
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Not used

Not used

Key
Red = future-unfavourable, i.e. the square contains one or more SACs where this habitat feature is present and has been predicted to be future-unfavourable
Green = future-favourable, i.e. the square contains at least one SAC where this habitat feature is present and has been predicted to be future-favourable
Blue = SAC not assessed, i.e. the square contains at least one SAC supporting this habitat feature but no assessment has been reported
Transparent = SAC feature not present, i.e. the square does not contain any SAC features of this habitat type

Key*
Green – 80 – 100% of assessed features on 10-km square are favourable
Yellow - 50 – 80% of assessed features on 10-km square are favourable
Orange - 20 – 50% of assessed features on 10-km square are favourable
Red - 0 – 20% of assessed features on 10-km square are favourable
 *This is the same key as was used for JNCC CSM Report 2006

5.3 Conclusions on future prospects (as regards range, area covered and specific structures and functions)

Conclusion^{2.6.iv}: **Favourable**

The EC Guidance states that where “habitat prospects are good with no significant impacts from threats expected and long-term viability assured”, the judgement should be Favourable. In the UK, this was generally taken to mean that range and/or area are stable or increasing, and more than 95% of the habitat area is likely to be in favourable condition in 12-15 years.

The principal future pressure (grazing) on H8120 is being addressed directly for the greater proportion of the resource of H8120 that lies within the statutory site series; and (particularly through agri-environment measures) for the smaller proportion of the resource of H8120 lying outside the statutory site series. However, uncertainty over the effective extent of changes to grazing may reduce the confidence associated with this judgement.

Within the SAC series, 87 % of the area of SAC and 80% of the sites for the feature are assessed by CSM as “future – unfavourable”. As most of the resource of H8120 lies within SACs in the UK, this figure can readily be extrapolated to suggest that at least 87% of the total UK resource of H8120 is likely to achieve favourable condition in the foreseeable future.

As there is no evidence to suggest a future decline in the area or range of H8120 in the UK by more than 1% p.a., the evidence from conservation measures currently in place and predicted to operate over the next 15-20 years leads to a judgement of Favourable for the future prospects for H8120 as less than 5% of the resource is expected to remain unfavourable.

6. Overall conclusions and judgements on conservation status^{2.6}

Conclusion^{2.6.iv}: **Unfavourable - Bad but improving**

On the basis of Structure and Function, the overall conclusion for this habitat feature is Unfavourable – Bad but improving.

Table 6.1 Summary of overall conclusions and judgements

Parameter	Judgement	Grounds for Judgement	Confidence in judgement*
Range	Favourable	Current range is stable and not less than the favourable reference range.	3
Area covered by habitat type within range	Favourable	Current extent is stable and not less than the favourable reference area.	2
Specific structures and functions (including typical species)	Unfavourable - Bad but improving	More than 25% of the habitat area is considered to be unfavourable as regards its specific structures and functions. Significantly more of the resource in unfavourable condition is improving than declining.	1
Future prospects (as regards range, area covered and specific structures and functions)	Favourable	Habitat prospects over the next 12-15 years considered to be good with no significant impacts from threats expected and long-term viability assured.	1
Overall	Unfavourable - Bad but	One parameter assessed as Unfavourable – Bad. Two	2

assessment of conservation status	improving	parameters are improving.	
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Key to confidence in judgement: 1 = High; 2 = Medium; 3 = Low

7. Annexed material (including information sources used 2.2)

7.1 References

JACKSON, D.L. 2000. Guidance on the interpretation of the Biodiversity Broad Habitat Classification (terrestrial and freshwater types): Definitions and the relationship with other habitat classifications. *JNCC Report No. 307*. JNCC, Peterborough.

JACKSON, D.L. & MCLEOD, C.R. (eds.) 2002. Handbook on the UK status of EC Habitats Directive interest features: provisional data on the UK distribution and extent of Annex I habitats and the UK distribution and population size of Annex II species. *JNCC Report No. 312*. Version 2. www.jncc.gov.uk/page-2447

JOINT NATURE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE. 2005a. *Common Standards Monitoring (CSM)*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough. www.jncc.gov.uk/page-2217

JOINT NATURE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE. 2005b. *Common Standards Monitoring Guidance for Upland Habitats* Version May 2005, Peterborough. www.jncc.gov.uk/page-2237

WILLIAMS, J.M. (ed.) 2006. *Common Standards Monitoring for Designated Sites: First Six Year Report*. Peterborough, JNCC. www.jncc.gov.uk/page-3520

Map data sources

JNCC International Designations Database. Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

7.2 Further information on CSM data as presented in Sections 4.2 and 5.2

Table 7.2.1 Summary of the coverage of the data shown in Tables 4.2.1 and 5.2.1

Data	Value
Number of SACs supporting feature (a)	11
Number of SACs with CSM assessments (b)	10
% of SACs assessed (b/a)	91
Extent of feature in the UK – hectares (c)	670
Extent of feature on SACs – hectares (d)	484
Extent of features assessed – hectares (e)	458
% of total UK hectareage on SACs (d/c)	72
% of SAC total hectareage that has been assessed (e/d)	95
% of total UK hectareage that has been assessed (e/c)	68

Table 7.2.2 Summary of grid square map data shown in Maps 4.2.1-3 and 5.2.1-3

Status	Number of squares	Proportion of all squares
Current – Unfavourable (red)	4	17%
Current – Favourable (green)	6	26%
On SAC but not assessed (blue)	1	4%
Not on SAC (transparent)	12	52%
Total Number of 10-km squares (any colour)	23	
Future – Unfavourable (red)	2	9%
Future – Favourable (green)	8	35%