# Scottish authorities reveal Nessie contingency plan to protect Loch Ness monster



For almost a century, Loch Ness has captivated the imaginations of locals and tourists alike, drawn by the mystery of its renowned inhabitant: the Loch Ness Monster, affectionately known as Nessie. Over time, stories of strange forms lurking beneath the surface and inexplicable sounds echoing through the loch have led to an enduring fascination and countless searches, yet Nessie has never definitively been confirmed. Despite this, Scottish authorities have prepared for the unlikely event of Nessie’s actual discovery through a document intriguingly dubbed the Nessie Contingency Plan.

Crafted by NatureScot in 2001 during a high point in Nessie-hunting enthusiasm, the plan lays out a structured approach for the treatment of any new creature found within the loch. A spokesperson from NatureScot explained to the BBC that the framework was initially developed to respond to frequent inquiries from the media about what would occur if Nessie were indeed found. They elaborated that the code was “partly serious and partly for a bit of fun,” designed not only to protect the legendary creature but also to safeguard any new species that might be discovered in Scotland's largest freshwater body.

Should a creature be unearthed, the plan stipulates that it must undergo scientific investigation, including DNA sampling, before being safely returned to the waters of Loch Ness. Crucially, it also mandates that the creature should receive legal protection, placing it on par with native species such as golden eagles and wildcats. Such protection would make it illegal to harm, capture, or kill this elusive beast.

Fears for Nessie’s safety are not without history. In 1938, a police officer alerted the Scottish Office about a group of hunters preparing to track the creature, reportedly intent on capturing it “dead or alive.” With a harpoon gun under construction and a team of twenty seasoned hunters, the threat was significant enough to warrant caution from the authorities.

The legend of Nessie has roots that trace back to the Middle Ages. It was said that the early Irish monk St. Columba encountered a mysterious animal in the River Ness, which flows out from the loch. However, the modern fascination with Nessie took shape in 1933, when Aldie Mackay, the manager of a nearby hotel, reported seeing a large, whale-like creature. This sighting was reported by the Inverness Courier, whose editor, Evan Barron, famously dubbed the creature a “monster,” thus embedding Nessie deeper into popular culture.

Since then, the tales of sightings have been numerous and often astonishing. The Official Loch Ness Monster Sightings Register, established in 1996, has recorded over 1,161 reports. Just last year, there were three recorded sightings, alongside a rather peculiar report for 2025 describing two humps moving serenely across the water's surface. Eyewitness descriptions have varied widely, from creatures resembling gigantic eels to those with crocodile-like skin.

While many are keen to maintain the mystery of Loch Ness, scientific inquiry into the creature has not ceased. The Loch Ness Investigation Bureau undertook extensive searches in the 1960s and 70s, while the late 1980s saw Operation Deepscan, which mobilised over twenty boats equipped with sonar technology to explore the depths of the loch.

In more recent times, a team of scientists from New Zealand conducted environmental DNA analysis of water samples from Loch Ness, investigating the possibility that the fabled monster stems from something far less mythical. Their findings indicated no evidence of ancient reptiles or monstrous creatures; instead, they suggested the sightings could be attributed to something much more mundane—giant eels residing in the loch.

The Nessie Contingency Plan, though originating from a light-hearted intent, highlights a significant commitment to conservation and ecological integrity. It echoes a broader ethos within Scotland, showcasing an understanding that while myths enrich cultural narratives, they must be intertwined with responsible stewardship of natural heritage.

## Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/what-should-person-find-loch-35291456), [[5]](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/08/27/finding-loch-ness-monster/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/what-should-person-find-loch-35291456), [[2]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-44519189), [[6]](https://www.iflscience.com/theres-actually-a-government-plan-to-deal-with-the-loch-ness-monster-48678)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/what-should-person-find-loch-35291456), [[3]](https://www.foxnews.com/tech/loch-ness-monster-this-is-scotlands-plan-if-the-fabled-beast-is-caught), [[4]](https://albertjack.com/2021/04/23/plan-loch-ness-monster-caught/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/what-should-person-find-loch-35291456), [[7]](https://meaww.com/a-scottish-agency-has-a-plan-for-what-to-do-if-the-loch-ness-monster-if-ever-found-nessie)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/what-should-person-find-loch-35291456), [[3]](https://www.foxnews.com/tech/loch-ness-monster-this-is-scotlands-plan-if-the-fabled-beast-is-caught)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/what-should-person-find-loch-35291456), [[5]](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/08/27/finding-loch-ness-monster/)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/what-should-person-find-loch-35291456), [[1]](https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/what-should-person-find-loch-35291456)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/scotland-now/what-should-person-find-loch-35291456> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-44519189> - In 2001, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) developed a 'partly serious, partly fun' code of practice outlining steps to protect the Loch Ness Monster if discovered. The plan includes taking a DNA sample from any new creature and releasing it back into the loch. Nick Halfhide from SNH stated that the code remains relevant today, emphasizing the importance of protecting any new species found in the loch. The plan was created during a period of heightened interest in Nessie and aims to ensure conservation efforts are in place if the creature is ever found.
3. <https://www.foxnews.com/tech/loch-ness-monster-this-is-scotlands-plan-if-the-fabled-beast-is-caught> - Scottish officials have a plan ready if the Loch Ness Monster is ever caught. In 2001, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) prepared a 'partly serious, partly fun' code of practice outlining steps to protect the creature, including taking a DNA sample and releasing it back into the loch. Nick Halfhide from SNH stated that the plan remains relevant today, emphasizing the importance of protecting any new species found in the loch. The plan was created during a period of heightened interest in Nessie and aims to ensure conservation efforts are in place if the creature is ever found.
4. <https://albertjack.com/2021/04/23/plan-loch-ness-monster-caught/> - In 2001, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) developed a 'partly serious, partly fun' code of practice outlining steps to protect the Loch Ness Monster if discovered. The plan includes taking a DNA sample from any new creature and releasing it back into the loch. Nick Halfhide from SNH stated that the code remains relevant today, emphasizing the importance of protecting any new species found in the loch. The plan was created during a period of heightened interest in Nessie and aims to ensure conservation efforts are in place if the creature is ever found.
5. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/08/27/finding-loch-ness-monster/> - NatureScot, the government conservation body, has a plan in place to protect the Loch Ness Monster if discovered. Known as the Nessie Contingency Plan, the document was drawn up in 2001 mainly as 'a bit of fun,' but also 'to offer protection not just to the elusive monster but to any new species found in the loch,' according to Nick Halfhide, director of nature and climate change at NatureScot. The plan includes taking a DNA sample from any new creature and releasing it back into the loch.
6. <https://www.iflscience.com/theres-actually-a-government-plan-to-deal-with-the-loch-ness-monster-48678> - Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) prepared a 'partly serious, partly fun' code of practice in 2001 outlining steps to protect the Loch Ness Monster if discovered. The plan includes taking a DNA sample from any new creature and releasing it back into the loch. Nick Halfhide from SNH stated that the code remains relevant today, emphasizing the importance of protecting any new species found in the loch. The plan was created during a period of heightened interest in Nessie and aims to ensure conservation efforts are in place if the creature is ever found.
7. <https://meaww.com/a-scottish-agency-has-a-plan-for-what-to-do-if-the-loch-ness-monster-if-ever-found-nessie> - Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) developed a 'partly serious, partly fun' code of practice in 2001 outlining steps to protect the Loch Ness Monster if discovered. The plan includes taking a DNA sample from any new creature and releasing it back into the loch. Nick Halfhide from SNH stated that the code remains relevant today, emphasizing the importance of protecting any new species found in the loch. The plan was created during a period of heightened interest in Nessie and aims to ensure conservation efforts are in place if the creature is ever found.