

## The Art of Data

#### Harnessing creativity to maximise the impact of biodiversity data

**Lisa Chilton** 

23 November 2023





#### Or, more accurately:

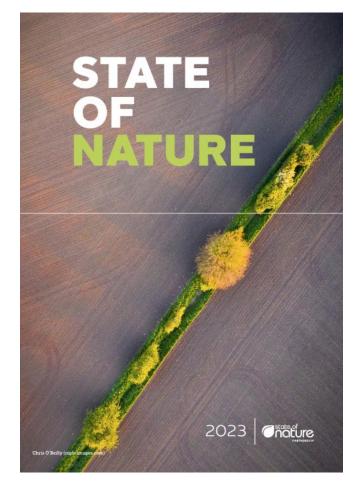
Semi-coherent but hopefully thought-provoking musings on the role of creativity and emotion in evidence-based nature recovery. With music. And audience participation.

Wifi: NMS Public





#### Data alone isn't enough



#### The UK's biodiversity is in trouble

More species have seen their populations decrease than increase

38% have decreased

**34% little change** 

27% have increased

The abundance of 753 terrestrial and freshwater species has on average fallen by

state of

PARTNERSHIP

# 19%

16% of species are threatened with extinction from Great Britain.
151 of 10,008 assessed have already become extinct.



#### The importance of creativity

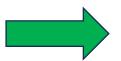
Nurturing creativity in ourselves (INPUT)





Creativity in how we communicate





Greater engagement Better decisions for nature (OUTPUT)



Add any weblinks or references here



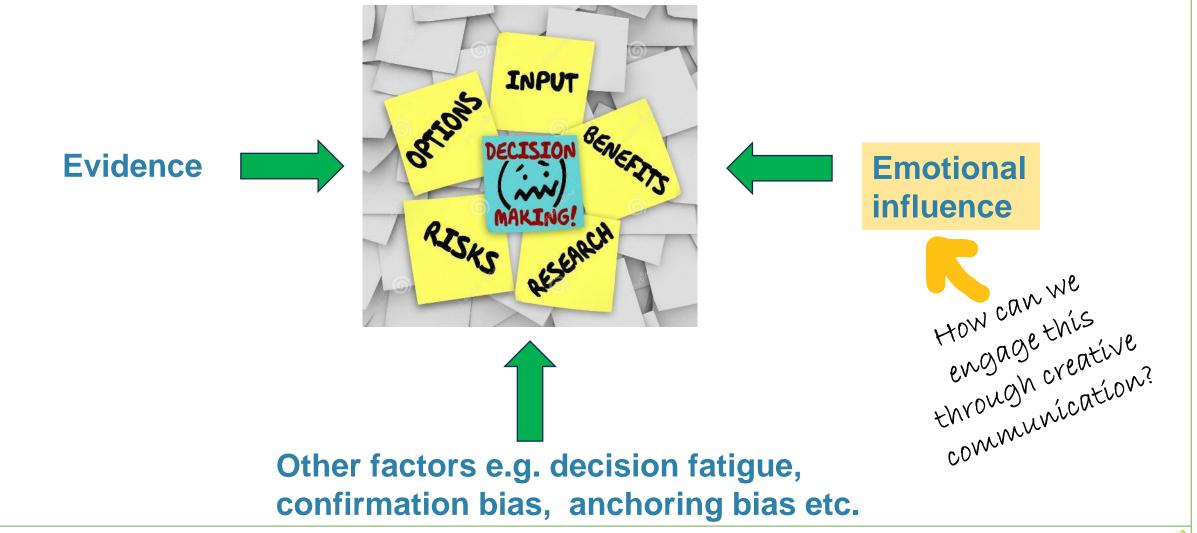
[This is what happens when you ask Bing AI to create an illustration representing Scottish biodiversity data]







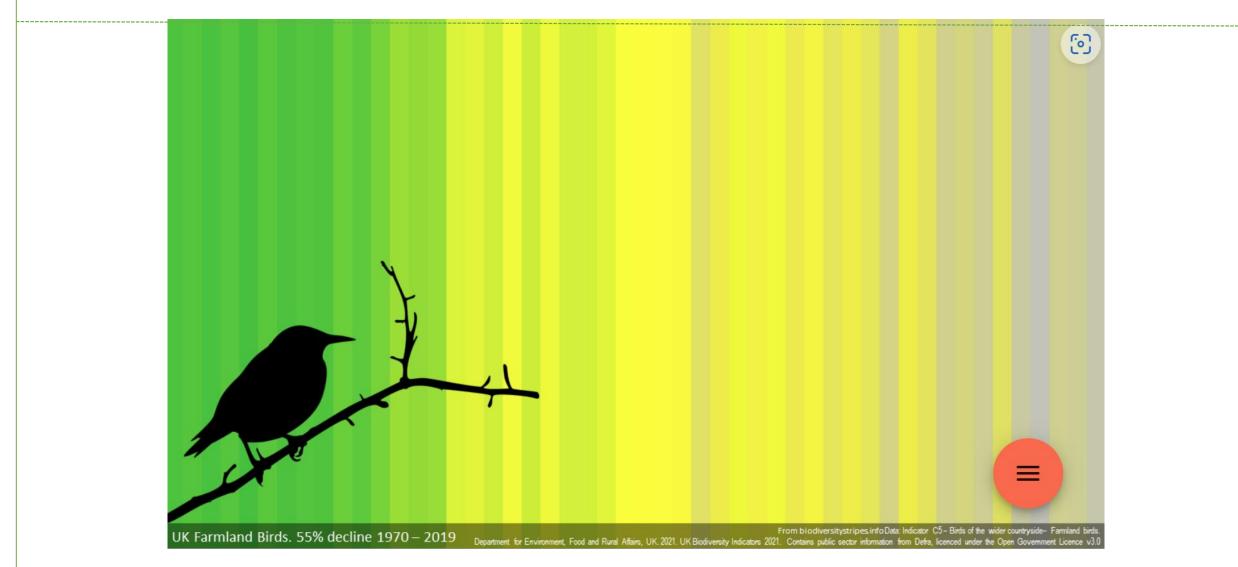
# What do we know about influences in decision making?



Add any weblinks or references here



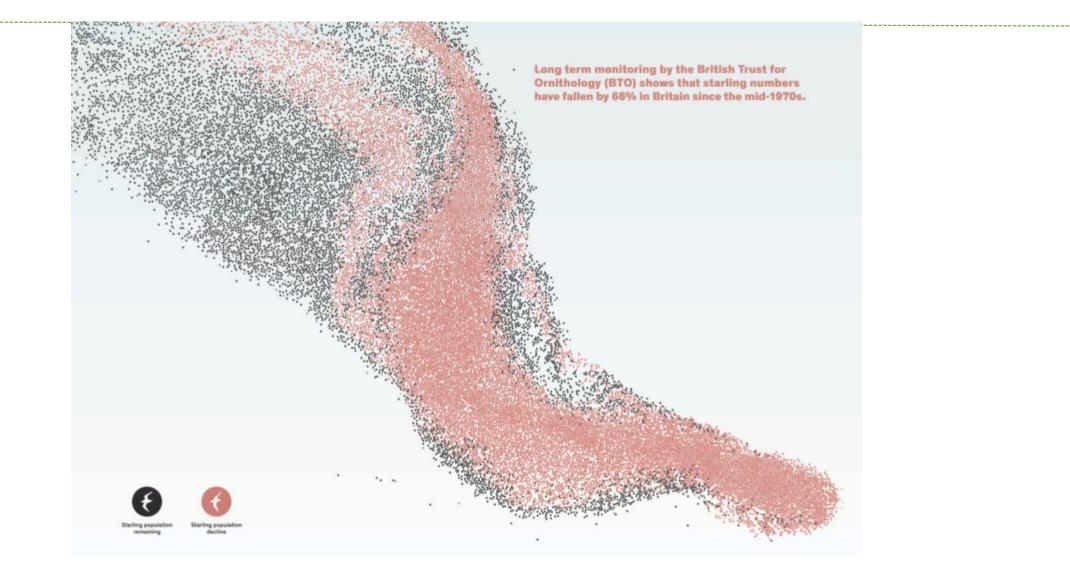
#### **Examples of creative data storytelling**



**Biodiversitystripes.info** 



#### **Data storytelling**



Common Cause for Nature\_practitioners\_guide.pdf (commoncausefoundation.org)



#### **Arts-Science collaborations**

 <u>The Dataset's Dream, Biological</u> <u>Records Centre</u>

"If data could talk, what would it say to us in this time of declining populations of our beautiful butterflies & moths?"

"a curious, sorrow-full, hope-full, data-full installation"

 Hot Poets' Haiku Futures project – haiku for COP28

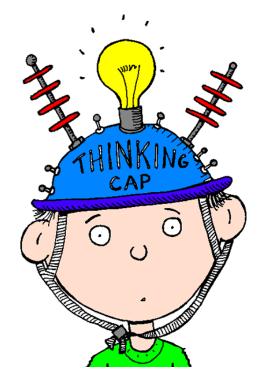






#### What is creativity?

- Not just a social or cultural construct
- A psychological and cognitive process
- Creates novel connections
- Uses both hemispheres and multiple regions of the brain
- It requires:
  - $\circ$  working memory
  - $\circ$  openness
  - o inhibition of our 'anchoring bias'
  - disinhibition of the flow of new and radical ideas and connections





### When is it most likely to happen?

- In positive emotional states
- Away from our desks
- In nature
- When we expose ourselves to new experiences, knowledge and environments
- When we let our minds wander
- Less usefully perhaps... during hypnagogia the state between wakefulness and sleep



- The science behind creativity (apa.org)
- Creativity in the Wild: Improving Creative Reasoning through Immersion in Natural Settings | PLOS ONE
- > The Poetry and Music of Science: Comparing Creativity in Science and Art | Oxford Academic (oup.com)
- When the Muses Strike: Creative Ideas of Physicists and Writers Routinely Occur During Mind Wandering | Request PDF (researchgate.net)



We need to use every tool at our disposal to tackle the biodiversity crisis, including our creativity. The challenges are too big for 'Business as Usual' thinking alone.

So, how can we better nurture our own creativity in the workplace to influence better decisions for nature?

Let's prioritise creativity and make changes to support it, as organisations and as individuals.

- Learning scientific creativity from the arts | Humanities and Social Sciences Communications (nature.com)
- 3 science-based strategies to increase your creativity | (ted.com)



#### **Erland Cooper – Solan Goose**

#### Gannet sounds here: www.erlandcooper.com/gannet



With thanks to Erland Cooper for permission to screen the Solan Goose video at the NBN Conference



Erland Cooper - Solan Goose (Official Video) - YouTube



# Thank you!

# Go forth and create!

