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Draft Bill for English Nature merger

English Nature is delighted to see the first public draft of the new Bill that will see it, as the Government's agency responsible for nature, merge with parts of the Countryside Agency and Rural Development Service. The Bill, published today, 10 February 2005, aims to establish a new agency to create a better natural environment for present and future generations and in so doing contribute to sustainable development.

Sir Martin Doughty, English Nature's Chair said: "Since Lord Haskin's Review of Rural Delivery in 2003 and the Secretary of State's announcement on the Rural Strategy in 2004 we have been working hard with colleagues in the Countryside Agency and Rural Development Service to align our work and pave the way towards the new agency. This consultation draft of the new Bill sets out an extremely important and very clear purpose for the new body which should deliver real improvements in the natural environment for the benefit of the country."

"English Nature's Council will now consider the Bill in detail, to see whether its aspirations for the new agency are included in the draft, and will advise Government in the near future. We will continue to work with Parliament and Defra to ensure that the final legislation will create a strong independent agency that builds on the strengths of all of the organisations that are merging. Everybody involved has a lot of hard work ahead to continue to deliver the essential work that we are doing now and secure the changes necessary to create the new agency."