

### Sounding our National Parks

Researchers from University College London and the Universities of Aberdeen and Sheffield have been working over the past eighteen months on a sound mapping project, funded through UKAN+. Working closely with staff at the fifteen UK National Parks, they have created a sound map which is launched this month. Featuring a few sounds submitted by staff, which were emblematic of their National Park, it uses a Google Earth Web interface where these sounds, along with images and text, can be found behind map pins situated at the locations where they were captured.

The map will now serve as a stimulus in a national call for sounds to the public, inviting them to engage with the sounds of the National Parks where they live or which they visit. Over the next twelve months, they can submit sounds recorded on mobile devices, along with reflective text explaining what the sounds mean to them and why they are emblematic of the Park. The intention is to build a record of the sonic environments that, all too often, are ignored when we spend time in these acoustically rich places.

The map can be found at <https://www.bit.ly/nationalparkssoundscapes> (please use Chrome, Edge, Opera or Firefox browsers) and further details, including how to upload sounds to the map, can be found at <https://www.bit.ly/npsoundscapespublic>

The research team has held focus group discussions with the Parks' staff, looking into how people working and living in the parks think about soundscapes and how to manage them. This work expands on the ISO 12913 framework on soundscape, which is currently focused around urban soundscapes, and is driven towards adapting that framework's tools for use in areas such as national parks. Initial findings were presented at *inter.noise 2022* in Glasgow (*Collecting and mapping soundscape data across the fifteen UK National Parks*) as well as at the 2<sup>nd</sup> UK-China Soundscape Forum (*Soundscapes of National Parks*).

Follow-on funding has been awarded by UCL Global Engagement to develop this work, partnering with academics in Italy at the EURAC Institute in Bolzano, linking sound projects undertaken in the Dolomites and the Cairngorms National Park:

<https://silenziinquota.mypixieset.com/silenzi-in-scotland>

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