

**Wetlands Biodiversity Delivery Group Meeting
Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, Oxford Island
Tuesday 27th April 2010**

Attendees

Neil Reid	(QUERCUS)
Marcus Malley	(NILGA)
Mary Gallagher	(NIEA/WMU)
Judith Annett	(NIBG)
Andrew McConville	(NI Water)
Bob Davidson	(NIEANH – Chair)
Godfrey McRoberts	(DARD)
Eileen Mallon	(NIEA/WMU)
David Griffiths	(University Of Ulster)
Dermot Hughes	(CNCC)
Richard Weyl	(NIEANH)
John Early	(NIEANH)
Helen Paul	(NIEANH – Minute taker)

1. Introduction

Bob introduced and welcomed Neil Reid from QUERCUS and Judith Annett chair of NIBG.

2. Apologies

David Garrett, Caroline Marshall, Garry O'Neill, Valerie Crozier, Andrew Upton, Robbie Marshall, Judith Bankhead, Alan Keys, Mark Horton, Robert Rosell & Phil Davidson.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

4. Matters Arising

Bob advised the group that the latest draft of PPS2 was with the minister with a view to going out to consultation. He will keep the group informed on its progress.

Action Point 1: Bob to keep the group updated on the timetable for the PPS2 consultation.

Bob informed the group that the CNCC landscape study was available and he would circulate to the group.

Action Point 2: Bob to issue CNCC landscape study to the group.

Bob informed the group that he had met with Mark about a month ago in relation to the Wetlands and Planning workshop and he advised that Mark could update the group at the next meeting.

Action Point 3: Mark to give the group a progress update.

Bob informed the group that NIEA had now set a date for the Lowlands Wetlands Group to specifically look at target setting, definition, measuring,

reporting and monitoring for lowland wetland habitats and species. The first meeting has been arranged for 28th May and anyone who would like to be involved should contact John.

Bob thanked Neil Reid from QUERCUS for agreeing to give a presentation and asked if QUERCUS would like to have a representative on the group. Neil advised that he felt that Jane Preston would be the best person to sit on the group.

Action Point 4: Bob to contact Jane Preston.

Richard reported that BARS training could be arranged but the training would have to be in a room with computers. A discussion took place and it was decided that rather than arranging training on the actual inputting of information a BARS awareness training event should be arranged. A discussion also took place over the enforcement of data being put into BARS which is funded.

Action Point 5: Richard to liaise with Martin Bradley to arrange a BARS awareness training event.

5. QUERCUS and the Natural Heritage Research Partnership

Neil gave a presentation on the work QUERCUS carries out and an overview of their structure and key work areas.

Bob informed the group that there had been a Lough Neagh Ecological workshop held in 2006 and he felt it would be good if another one could be jointly arranged possibly with QUERCUS.

Action Point 6: Bob to check with Caroline Marshall about the potential to run the workshop in partnership with the Lough Neagh and Lower Bann Advisory Committee.

6. Reports from UK River HAP, UK Pond HAP, UK Lake HAP and UK Freshwater and Wetlands Group meetings.

Bob reported that there are various groups that meet at a UK level and Richard, John & himself sit on the group relevant to them. He advised that it is a useful way to keep up to date with what the GB is doing.

It was agreed that John should set up a Pond & Lake group initially to look at expressing targets relevant to those Habitat types.

Action Point 7: John to set up Pond & Lake group.

Bob invited Judith to say a few words at this point. Judith informed everyone that she was delighted to have the opportunity to attend the meeting as chair of NIBG and thanked Bob for the invitation. She advised that she hoped the NIBG would have a good working relationship with each of the delivery groups and pointed out that if there were issues that this group felt they couldn't get progressed any further the NIBG would be happy to take these to a higher level. It was agreed that the chair of the Wetland BDG would attend NIBG meetings once per year to discuss progress with work programmes & key

issues. Judith stressed that she was keen to see positive actions arising from the work of the Biodiversity Delivery Groups.

7. Lake Tiering Process

John tabled a paper on the 'Proposed development of a lake tiering system for NI.' John asked the group for their comments and a discussion took place and the following changes were agreed:-

Tier 1

Point 3 – remove 'or at least 'Good' Status under WFD Classification'

Point 4 – remove completely

Point 5 – Move to Tier 2.

Point 6 – Remove

John advised that it was hoped that by the next meeting we would have a focused list for Tier 1 & 2.

8. NI Priority Species

Richard give an update on the NI Priority Species list. He advised that the list consisted of 481 species and that it was hoped that by the next meeting there will be a list of actions this group will take forward.

9. Invasive Alien Species Update

John informed the group that the Invasive Species in Ireland project had commenced in December 2009. He advised the group that the All Ireland Invasive Species Forum was being held in Dublin on 13th May 2010. He reported that a new species, the asian clam, had been found in the Barrow river in Waterford but so far the weir seems to have stopped its progress.

10. Eel Management Plan update

Robert was unable to attend the meeting but he will keep us updated on any progress.

11. Work Programme

Richard asked for everyone to provide a brief update on any targets relating to their organisation. A revised work programme will then be issued to the group.

Action Point 8: All to submit an update on relevant targets to John.

Action Point 9: John to issue revised work programme.

12. AOB

John informed everyone of a project to re-introduce white-clawed crayfish into Knockballymore marl lake later this year.

Richard reported that the electronic version of the fen management handbook would be launched on world peatlands day. He advised that it was hoped a hardback version would be published later this year following on from comments received.

13. Date of next meeting

The dates for the next 2 meetings are to be arranged.