

Draft
Peatlands & Uplands Biodiversity Delivery Group Meeting
Thursday 8th May 2008 - Oxford Island

Attendees

John Duggan (Westland Horticulture)
 Andrew Upton (Ulster Wildlife Trust)
 Wendy McKinley (Strategy Unit, EHS)
 Judith Stuart (DEFRA)
 Louise McAlavey (PEPG)
 Martin Bradley (EHS)
 Richard Schable (Forest Service)
 Richard Weyl (EHS)
 Claire Ferry (RSPB)
 Demot Hughes (CNCC)
 Helen Paul (EHS, Minute Taker)

1. Introduction

Richard W welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies

Billy McCabe (DARD), Godfrey McRoberts (CMB), John Hetherington (Forestry & Timber Association), Ken Bradley (PEPG)

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

Action Points from meeting held 24/04/07	Progress
Richard W to contact UFU	C/F
Richard W to circulate SLNCl guidelines to the group	C/F
Richard W advised that the ASSI report reviewing delivery of Biodiversity priorities on designated sites will be undertaken this year and that the sections affecting Peatlands & Upland would be circulated to the group	C/F
Action Points C/F from meeting held 8/11/07	
AP 1 - Martin to circulate Peatlands Inventory to the group	
AP 10 - Martin to circulate minutes of the Species Delivery Group meeting once they are cleared.	
AP 14 – Richard W to send copies of the presentations from the ‘Peatland Climate Change Seminar’ to the group	
AP 15 – Mairead & Raja to send their presentations to Helen who will issue them to the group.	
AP 16 – Richard W to speak to Ken re relationship between PUBDG & Peatland Policy Reduction	

AP 17 - Jim to contact DARD re scoping exercise to review the approach to less favourable areas.

4. Matters Arising

Richard stated that we hadn't received the presentations from the Peatland Climate Change Seminar in Athlone but that he would chase them up as they may be of interest to Judith.

He also advised the group that the presentations by CAFRE (Raja Harun) and Mairead Kilpatrick (AFBI) hadn't been sent to us but again we would chase these up.

Action Point 1: Richard to obtain various presentations and to circulate to the group.

5 & 6. Work Programme/ 2008 Reporting

Martin gave a brief demonstration of the BARS (Biodiversity Action Reporting System). He explained that the front end of the system was fully accessible to the public and the login facility had restricted access. He explained that he had input some of the work programme actions in the system and that we would report against these aggregated actions. If it is required to report individually against all published HAP & SAP actions, another step in the process would need to be investigated.

Action Point 2: Martin to check with BARS administrator if it would be possible to link a spreadsheet to the system.

Louise asked if everyone would have access to inputting to the system or if it would be limited. Martin advised that there would have to be some form of limited access. It was felt by the group that it would be beneficial if Martin receives an email to let him know when an amendment is made or data entered to the system.

Action Point 3: Martin to investigate the use of 'system alerts' with BARS administrator.

Richard informed the group that EHS had to prepare a report in November 2008 on published targets. It was agreed that Richard would circulate a draft report to the group before the next meeting.

It was also agreed that Richard would prepare a paper on the targets from the work programme and what actions they feel could be recorded. This could then be discussed at the next meeting.

Action Point 4: Richard to circulate a draft of the November 08 report before the next meeting.

Action Point 5: Richard to prepare and circulate targets and draft actions from work programme.

Richard had a copy of a paper entitled 'A Summary of Suitability of Key Data Sources for Reporting on NI Priority Habitats'. He only had one copy of the paper with him but he agreed to email it to everyone.

Action Point 6: Richard to email 'A Summary of Suitability of Key Data Sources for Reporting on NI Priority Habitats' to the group.

Action Point 7: Richard to find out to what extent the ASSI condition monitoring data will be available and to inform the group.

Action Point 8: Louise to talk to Jackie re trying to get the Departments on board and using the system.

Action Point 9: Richard to make a list of data needs required for reporting against actions.

Action Point 10: Martin to send most recent version of the Work Programme to the group.

7. Peatland Habitat Condition Workshop

Richard informed the group that a Peatland Habitat Condition Workshop took place on 7th February 2008. A discussion took place on the paper which detailed the outcomes of the workshop called 'Guidelines for Monitoring and Reporting on the NI Blanket Bog and Lowland Raised Bog Habitat Action Plans'.

Declan thought draining/cutting should be included in Blanket Bog.

Richard suggested that the guidelines should be tested by the group at a field trip to see how it works on the ground.

Action Point 11: Richard to review how monitoring and reporting is going to be taken up by DARD and to talk to CMB.

It was suggested that raised bog attributes could be reduced and it was also felt that images would be of benefit.

Claire agreed to find out what guidelines RSPB uses and to provide feedback to the group.

Action Point 12: Claire to let the group know what guidelines RSPB use.

8. 2008/09 Workshop

Richard advised the group that it was proposed to hold a Red Grouse workshop later in the year and asked if everyone was content with this proposal. It was agreed to go ahead with a Red Grouse Workshop. Glenwherry and Lough Feagh were mentioned as good examples of places where grouse management is in place. Claire agreed to get some good news stories and contacts for Richard for the workshop.

Action Point 13: Claire to give Richard good news stories on Red Grouse & to give him some contacts.

Action Point 14: Richard to arrange Red Grouse workshop.

Richard asked anyone with any ideas for the workshop to let him know.

Action Point 15: All to email Richard with ideas for workshop.

9. DEFRA Peat Soils project

Judith Stuart gave an overview of the project they were running in the UK. Wendy explained that EHS were carrying out a scoping exercise at present to gauge interest and cost before deciding whether or not to become a partner in the project. She agreed to act as co-ordinator and provide an update at these meetings.

Action Point 16: Wendy to get Judith's paper on the project and issue to the group.

10. Website Proposal

Martin displayed the website for the group to see. He pointed out that if anyone would like anything added to the webpage to email either himself or Larry Toal. The group also requested that if there was any major change to the webpage that an email should be sent to inform them.

Martin agreed to inform the group if any major changes were made to the webpage.

11. NI Species Delivery Group Update

Richard informed the group that the 2nd meeting of the Species Delivery Group had not taken place.

12. International Peat Congress - Tullamore

Richard & Martin are both attending the congress and Richard said that he will mention the DEFRA project.

13. AOB

Claire took the opportunity to give a brief outline of a discussion paper she had drafted on Wind Farms. She felt this was a good opportunity to get areas of upland into good management. She informed the group that an initial discussion meeting would hopefully be held in June and anyone interested in attending to let her know.

Action Point 17: Claire to send discussion paper to the group.

14. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is arranged for Thursday 6th November 2008 at Oxford Island.

Summary of Action Points

Action Point 1	Richard to obtain various presentations and circulate to the group.
Action Point 2	Martin to check with BARS administrator if it would be possible to link a spreadsheet to the system.
Action Point 3	Martin to investigate the use of 'system alerts' with BARS administrator.
Action Point 4	Richard to circulate a draft of the November 2008 report before the next meeting.
Action Point 5	Richard to prepare and circulate targets and draft actions from the work programme.
Action Point 6	Richard to email 'A Summary of Suitability of Key Data Sources for Reporting on NI Priority Habitats' to the group.
Action Point 7	Richard to find out to what extent the ASSI condition monitoring data will be available and to inform the group.
Action Point 8	Louise to talk to Jackie re trying to get the Departments onboard and using the system via BIPs.
Action Point 9	Richard to make a list of data needs required for reporting actions
Action Point 10	Martin to send most recent version of the work programme to the group
Action Point 11	Richard to review how monitoring and reporting is going to be taken up by DARD and to talk to CMB
Action Point 12	Claire to let the group know what guidelines RSPB use.
Action Point 13	Claire to provide Richard with good news stories on Red Grouse to give him some contacts
Action Point 14	Richard to arrange Red Grouse workshop
Action Point 15	All to email Richard with ideas for workshop
Action Point 16	Wendy to get Judith's paper on the project and issue to the group
Action Point 17	Claire to send discussion paper to the group.