

Wetlands Biodiversity Delivery Group Meeting Oxford Island Discovery Centre 26th October 2006

Attendees

Bob Davidson (EHS - Chair)
Richard Weyl (EHS)
Louise McAlavey (EHS)
Joanne Livingstone (EHS)
Colin Somerville (EHS – Minute Taker)
Judith Bankhead (Rivers Agency)
Alan Keys
David Griffiths
David Loughlin
John Gamble (DARD Central Policy Group)
Catherine McSorley (EHS WMU representing Mary Gallagher)
Rhona Irvine (Freshwater Task Force representing Phil Davidson)
Marcus McAuley (DCAL Inland Fisheries)
Paul Lynas (NIBG)
Richard Crowe (DARD Service Delivery Group)
Liz Whiteside (DARD Service Delivery Group)
Richard Kennedy (Fisheries Conservancy Board)
Paddy Boylan (Loughs Agency)
Robert Rosell (AFBI)

1. Introduction

Bob welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for introductions from new members to the group.

2. Apologies

Michael Meharg (EHS) Alex McGarel (CNCC), Phil Davidson (FTF), Jim Ryan (NPWS), James Robinson (NIBG) Mary Gallagher (EHS WMU) Rachel Bain (Freshwater Task Force) Brian Finn (FCB replacing Richard Kennedy)

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting 22nd June 2006

Agreed

4. Matters Arising

Bob will contact Forest Service again to request a representative.

Action: Bob

Update on Habitat Action Plans

Relevant Habitat Action Plans have been e-mailed to the group.

Local Biodiversity Action Plans

Michael arranged for Louise McAlavey to deliver a presentation at this meeting.

Terms of Reference (TOR)

Bob confirmed that the Terms of Reference had been amended as per the recommendations at the previous meeting, and proposed that the group review the TOR at the next meeting.

Work Programme

Bob confirmed that the suggested amendments to the Work Programme had been carried out.

Marcus advised the group that the DNA work to be carried out on Salmonids in the Lough Neagh system was in doubt due to financial constraints.

5. Raising the profile of the group

Bob circulated a paper on how the profile of the group could be raised.

It was agreed that there should be a section on the EHS website detailing the aims, work and outputs of all of the Biodiversity Delivery Groups. There should be links to all relevant organisations.

Action: Bob to co-ordinate

It was also agreed that Paul should write to Bob Brown to enquire about the possibility of a NIBG website, which could provide links to the Biodiversity Delivery Groups Section of the EHS website.

Louise suggested that Paul should also ask Bob Brown about the success of the Pop-Up stand and leaflets that were produced to raise the profile of NIBG.

Action: Paul

Alan suggested that TV would be a useful means to raise the profile, as many people do not have web access.

6. Presentation on Local Biodiversity Action Plans

Louise McAleavey gave a presentation on Local Biodiversity Action Plans and highlighted work that was being carried out by LBAP Officers on wetlands. She also raised concerns that LBAP Officers had over wetland issues.

It was agreed that the Wetlands Biodiversity Delivery Group should produce a guidance document with web links to the various organizations that could provide useful information for the LBAP Officers.

Bob, Paddy, Paul and a member of Countryside Management Branch will hold a workshop to take this project forward.

Action: Bob to co-ordinate

Louise asked if an LBAP Officer could be represented on the Wetland Biodiversity Group, however, Bob advised that NILGA were going to nominate a rep who might possibly be an LBAP Officer. When the NILGA rep is confirmed, this topic can be revisited, if necessary.

In the meantime Paul Lynas agreed to provide a liaison role between the group and the LBAP Officers. This will include circulation of minutes and other relevant papers.

Action: Paul

7. Work Programme

It was agreed that the group should be named the Wetlands Biodiversity Delivery Group. This should be reflected in the introduction to the Work Programme and throughout the document, the TOR etc.

1.1.1 Produce a summary on the current position on designating Wetlands.

Action: Bob

1.1.2 Identify the Conservation objectives for designated sites so that LBAP Officers can concentrate on these.

Action: Bob

2.1 Produce a paper or talk on the number of favorable SPA's SAC's DCAL and Loughs Agency can provide some of this information, and should be added to the Partners column.

Action: Bob

2.2.1 There may be potential for a service contract to identify and initiate a programme for Wetlands restoration. DCAL have a model that could be used.

2.2.2 Richard Crowe asked for clarification on the current status of MOSS
Timeframe to be changed to Ongoing

Action: Bob

Richard agreed to send a note about the potential for agricultural schemes to contribute to Wetland restoration.

Action: Richard Crowe

2.2.3 New task to be added to Work Programme:
Inshore Fisheries to report on monitoring and restoration partnership process.

Action: Bob

Action: Marcus to clarify task wording.

3. Richard Crowe pointed out that there was only a 40% take up of agricultural schemes, and that the group should consider the other 60%.

Rivers and streams as a broad habitat should be included in the table.
Species should be added to the table after the next meeting.

Action: Bob

3.1.1 Reword to "Collectively ensure that PPS2 adequately protects and promotes wetland habitats biodiversity."

All members of the Wetlands Biodiversity Delivery Group should be advised when PPS2 is published.

Action: Bob

3.1.2 Reword to “Monitor and control the impact of invasive species as a result of the risk assessment process and consider impacts on management schemes.”

Remove DARD from Partners

Action: Bob

3.1.3 Covered after presentation.

3.1.4 Reword to “Ensure that agricultural related grant schemes are used effectively to positively deliver wetland management”.

Action: Bob

3.1.5 Reword to “take account of” instead of “do not damage”.

Add Loughs Agency to Partners and change timescale to ongoing.

Action: Bob

3.2.1 Reword to “extent, location and condition...” Partners should read “EHS”.

Action: Bob

3.2.2 Catherine outlined a project that WMU are carrying out to record useful information on lakes that will be easily accessible. The website www.uklakes.net does not contain any information on lakes in Northern Ireland, and Catherine stated that WMU would be grateful for any information that this group could provide for their project.

It was suggested that she look at the N/S share website where similar work on a sample of 40 lakes was recorded, and CEDaR may also provide useful information.

3.2.3 Timescale to be amended to ongoing.

3.2.4 Richard Weyl will provide more information on classifications, definitions and indicators.

DARD to be removed from Partners and timescale to be amended to 2007.

Action: Richard Weyl

3.2.5 To be deleted as this area is covered in 3.1.4

3.3 Richard Weyl will discuss monitoring the condition of wetland habitats and species at the next meeting.

Action: Richard Weyl

3.4.1 A strategic review of restoration opportunities will be a contract. After establishing the requirements, a draft specification will be circulated.

Timeframe to be amended to 2009.

Action: Bob

4. EHS may run a workshop to establish what local wetlands are included in River Basin Management Plans.
Paddy wants DCAL and Loughs Agency expertise to be considered.
Bob will report on Water Framework Directive issues at the next meeting.

Action: Bob

5. The group should e-mail details of all ongoing research on wetlands to Bob and EHS will produce an inventory of completed and ongoing research.

Action: All & Bob

6. Bob advised that there is a possibility of EHS employing an Education Officer who could focus on wetlands.
Paddy highlighted that information was available at the Loughs Agency Visitor Centre, and Alan mentioned ongoing education at Ballinderry River School.

Action: All to e-mail Bob about what education/awareness is already happening.

8. Any Other Business

Alan and Paddy delivered presentations at an International Salmon Conference. If anyone requires further information about this, Alan and Paddy would be happy to discuss.

9. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 15th May 2007 at The Kinneogoe Room, Oxford Island Discovery Centre