

[Http://intranet/innovation](http://intranet/innovation)

England Biodiversity Group Workshop

14th October 2008

Event report

Author: Tony Mobbs
Version number: 2.0
Date: 15th October 2008



Contents

Introduction	3
Attendees	3
Workshop Objectives	4
Event Agenda	4
Sectoral Workstreams.....	5
Agriculture	5
Water and wetlands.....	6
Woodlands and forestry	7
Towns, Cities and Development.....	8
Coasts	9
Marine	9
Cross-Cutting Workstreams.....	10
Climate change adaptation.....	10
Local and regional biodiversity	10
Education and public understanding	11
Business and biodiversity.....	12
Economics and funding	13
Workstream Interdependencies	14
Sectoral	14
Cross-Cutting	15
Actions.....	16
Issues working with BARS	17

Introduction

This report provides a summary of the main sessions performed during the England Biodiversity Group Workshop held at the Defra Innovation Centre on 14th October 2008.

The workshop was facilitated by Tony Mobbs from the Defra Innovation centre facilitation team.

Attendees

The attendees were:

- Martin Brasher Defra, EBG Chair
- Pete Brotherton, Natural England
- Paul Cobbing, Local and Regional Chair, GOWM
- Claire Collyer, CLA
- Rob Cooke, Coasts Chair, Natural England
- Amy Coyte, Bat Conservation Trust
- Ann Davies, Agriculture Chair, Defra
- Helen Dunn, Defra
- Megan Ellershaw, Natural England
- Andrea Graham, NFU
- Rachel Hackett, WT
- Doug Hulyer, EPU Chair
- Rebecca Isted, FC
- Timo King, Defra
- Phil Lewis, Defra
- Elaine Kendall, CCA Chair, Defra
- David Knight, Natural England
- Pete Massini, Natural England
- David Pape, HCC
- Simon Pryor, FC
- Paul Raven, EA
- Andy Simpson, RSPB
- Mark Stevenson, Defra
- Louise Vall, Defra
- Ben Vivian, Business Chair, Aggregate Industries
- Roger Ward, Defra
- Judith Webb, Forestry Chair, FC
- Sarah Webster, Defra
- Duncan Williams, Defra
- Richard Wright, Marine Chair, Natural England
- Robin Wynde, RSPB

Workshop Objectives

The main objectives of the workshop were:

- To review achievements against published deliverables for 2008
- To confirm deliverables for 2010
- To ensure that deliverables for 2010 build in adaptation to climate change and reflect the new framework for delivery

Event Agenda

The agenda for the event was as follows:

- Welcome to the Innovation Centre
- Objectives of the Workshop
- Introductions
- Presentations by Sectoral Workstreams
- General discussion & interdependencies
- lunch
- Going forward; using BARS to record progress
- Presentations by cross-cutting workstreams
- General discussion & interdependencies
- Next steps

Sectoral Workstreams

Agriculture

Oral questions:

- **Q 1:** (M. Stevenson) - What evidence do you need to generate vision?
- **Q2:** (Sarah Webster) We already have a published vision – **A:** yes but this will be something much more practical
- **Q 3:** (Sarah Webster) Do these Key Deliverables represent the ambitions of the partnership as regards what we want for biodiversity within the agriculture sector? **A:** That is what the vision will say
- **Q4:** (Robin Wynde) How will the concerns of the Biodiversity Integration groups be incorporated given that they haven't met yet?
- **Q5:** We need to consider the consequences for biodiversity of climate change adaptation in the agriculture sector – new crops, water use, shift in cropping patterns.

Desk questions:

- Vision and communication – how will you ensure that the products map and gap with other initiatives
- Who is the vision for?
- New deliverable 4. What criteria will you use to measure whether this deliverable has been achieved?
- What are timescales for coming up with vision and key comms message?
- Can we afford to wait until 2010 to deliver this?
- Who will own the vision to come out of the group?
- How does the narrative in the comms deliverable differ from the vision?
- What are realistic targets for biodiversity in England?
- How will workstream actually influence policy – no/little buy in from colleagues leading policy!
- Worth tapping into the expertise in FFG on agriculture and climate change?
- Is the appraisal of environmental stewardship going to happen? Is it parked or damaged?
- Timescale for defining the actions that will happen will underpin the vision?

Water and wetlands

Oral questions:

- **Q1:** (Roger Ward) On Deliverable 2 (River Basin Biodiversity Framework), where you say there is inadequate funding, who needs to do what to unblock? How much would it cost and is it realistic to think that it would ever be achieved? A cross-cutting issue is that funding in relation to our business. **A:** EA/NE must demonstrate that BAP is central to key outcomes. Use Flood Management argument and “polluter pays” principle
- **Q2:** (Pete Brotherton) £50-60k each region therefore £0.5m. David Henshilwood: Helpful to have this quantified across the piece in ball-park figures
- **Q3:** (Roger Ward) what role or group in monitoring implementation making happen on ground?
- **Q4:** (Pete Brotherton) Do we understand the gap between the WFD implementation and HAP target delivery and whether this could be a future deliverable?

Desk questions:

- Does the second deliverable need amendment in terms of what can be achieved by 2010?
- Does comms deliverable need to be reviewed to better exploit success of wetland vision projects?
- Is there a common geography with other elements of EBB?
- Given the importance of the WFD, are the indicators adequate to assess how well the directive has been implemented?

Woodlands and forestry

Oral Questions

- **Q1:** (David Henshilwood) whether the group had considered the implications of climate change and sequestration?
- **Q2:** (Ann Davies) Agriculture and Woodlands group need to talk to each other to ensure visions are moving in the same direction.
- **Q3:** General question about the indicators and how these fit in with all the workstreams.
- **Q4:** (Pete Brotherton) Who is the vision was for and where the different visions comes together - at the regions? Are you thinking of producing a map?

Desk Questions

- What is boundary between work of SIG, and work of woodland BIG?

Towns, Cities and Development

Oral questions

- **Q1:** (Roger Ward) How does this workstream engages with the policy agenda and the planning system? Is any workstream picking up something that is a key driver for biodiversity loss?
- **Q2:** Paul Cobbing made a point about biodiversity standards needing to be made specific to localities at the regional level.
- **Q3:** Mark Stevenson noted that he needed to talk to the local and regional group about indicators - Paul offered to put this on the agenda for the next meeting.
- **Q4:** Sarah Webster asked about setting targets for 2008 for the new habitat type of open mosaic habitats - David Knight responded that it was do- able but would not be that robust.
- **Q5:** Martin Brasher made a point about the liveability agenda and whether this was a broader issue for all workstreams rather than just the towns and cities group.
- **Q6:** Roger ward made a point about the workstream's engagement with the policy agenda re development planning system and whether the focus on urban for this group meant that there was now a gap for something that was a key driver for biodiversity loss.
- **Q7:** (Pete Massini) Want communication about CLG representation and CABE need to be involved again.

Desk questions

- I don't understand the comment:- "NE and Defra policy officials leading on this work separate from the England Biodiversity Strategy." If they are working on this, then they are working on the strategy! The strategy is the country's Biodiversity strategy – includes the lot!

Coasts

Oral questions

- **Q1:** Sarah Webster made a point about the deliverable really being two rather than one.
- **Q2:** Robin Wynde noted that it was the smartest deliverable so far, and asked how the deliverables could generally be made more measurable.
- **Q3:** Sarah Webster noted that deliverables needed to be high level with work plans and measurable actions below that.
- **Q4:** (Paul Cobbing) You need to talk to EA
- **Q5:** (Roger Ward) On making sure that the PPS 20 review reflected ICZM principles: what is group doing to make it happen? **A:** (Rob Cooke) Don't envisage the workstream group making its own submission, but discussions on the group would feed into each organisation's own submissions. (Roger Ward) yes, but group job is to make it happen

Desk questions

- Are there other deliverables relating to BAP delivery (i.e. the 'BIG' role)

Marine

Oral questions

(Richard Wright) Biggest issue is Marine Protected Area network and the clear Government target to identify and designate these areas by 2012.

(Richard Wright) we are identifying what are the *key* elements of programme where we need to climate-change proof

- **Q1:** (Martin Brasher) Take point about 2012, but everyone else has specified at least milestones for 2010 – please change for consistency

Desk questions

-

Cross-Cutting Workstreams

Climate change adaptation

Oral questions

- **Q1:** Paul Cobbing made a point about National indicator 198 on climate change – we have got an 18 month window to get something into that.
A: (Elaine Kendal) noted that we needed to plug into what adaptation policy Framework people are doing.

Desk questions

- Using scarce resources to visit other SIGs looks like a wise investment as long as the group doesn't disband – it needs to maintain consistency
- How do we climate-proof CBS's policies? How do we decide what other BAP actions we will no longer take
- Why is it no longer a priority to update climate change impact forecasts on biodiversity?

Local and regional biodiversity

Oral questions

(Paul Cobbing) The group is very fluid which is an issue.

(Paul Cobbing) Huge flow of devolved policies coming our way – devolved government agenda. Integrated regional strategies – huge impact.

- **Q1:** Why is NE core work different from the work we would expect the regional coordinators to be doing.
- **Q2:** Mark Stevenson noted that he needed to talk to the local and regional group about indicators - Paul offered to put this on the agenda for the next meeting.

Desk questions

- To what extent do local / regional SIG consider marine issues
- Landscape scale partnerships – do you create new / more or is it better to use existing l's partnerships to include biodiversity in their work / discussions directed / linked more with the SIG
- What is SIG doing to join up work of local record centres, local sites partnerships and LBAP's
- Del.3. Landscape scale partnerships can we ensure that these focus on biodiversity priorities?
- L+R SIG – if funding is ongoing issue which can't ever really be solved, should it be high level deliverable?

Education and public understanding

Oral questions

(Doug Hulyer) No 2 meetings have the same group of people

- How do we continue in our relationship with the BBC beyond 2010?
- **Q1:** (Sarah Webster) Do we have “before” and “after” figures for Deliverable 1 (1 million new people engaged in action)? **A:** No.
- **Q2:** (Martin Brasher) DCSF is interested in finding links with Darwin bicentenary events. Also 2010 – International year of biodiversity – are you making links there?. **A:** re DCSF – yes; we are targeting them we have a real action plan in draft that will attract them.

Desk questions

- EPU best indicator of numbers of people engaged in biodiversity is membership of NGO's
- Is there scope for linking EPU's work with preparations for Darwin 200, which offers a number of high profile opportunities
- How are comms messages generated by CCPU linked up with comms priorities

Business and biodiversity

Oral questions

(Ben Vivian) Problem is that we have an incredibly wide agenda. 10-15% of workforce redundant. This will be common across business. Community remains confused about what this is all about. Distinguish direct impacts and indirect impact via anyone who buys anything. Also some SSSIs in our context haven't been surveyed in a decade!

- **Q1:** (Phil Lewis) BBC target was to get 20,000 businesses engaged. They soon found out how difficult this was.
- **Q2:** (Roger Ward) do you think there is a role for business and biodiversity Workstream? Or are we flogging a dead horse. **A:** (Ben Vivian) If you can engage business, you can more faster, because we have the "pockets". Biodiversity is a "Big business" issue – then use supply chain muscle to engage with others in the sector. No point in trying to engage SMEs at the outset.

Desk questions

- How do we take amount of changing economic climate i.e. how realistic is it to expect much engagement in recession? Is it worth committing our scarce resources?
- Did not get any sense of what action will / should be taken! Lots of problems and lack of engagement / delivery – what are the solutions?
- Can the SIG have a role in improving reporting and benchmarking? If so, how?
- What evidence / tools do we need to get biodiversity assets on to business books?
- You mentioned direct impacts, indirect impacts but do we need to do more to influence investment decisions and influence financial institutions even in current climate to be more sustainable?
- Given group is starting up again, is it worth doing a scoping exercise first and identify key issues
- Even focussing on big business is there an argument for focussing more at regional level and engagement than at just national level

Economics and funding

Oral questions

- **Q1:** (Phil Lewis): Do you think the workstreams have used the paper we produced?
- **Q2:** (David Henshilwood): How are you plugged into European and wider agenda? **A:** (Helen Dunn) TEEB
- **Q4:** (Pete Massini) If this is all market-related, (a) there should be links with business workstream and (b) what about non-market goods?

Desk questions

- Are these two issues so different that they should be covered by separate groups?
- What happens next on the issue of a users guide to accessing funding? Should we look for other way of producing this?

Workstream Interdependencies

Sectoral

- Generic issue across all workstreams re-communication – better communication on EBS and workstreams to be made available on Defra web-site
- Make deliverables smarter – or ensure that workplan is smart
- To simplify complexity
- Do we need more join up on individual SIG key deliverables on communication? E.g. agriculture one is “a narrative on importance of conserving farmland biodiversity” Who produces and distributes?
- How do we get ownership of EBS / workstreams with Defra / OGD policy leads
- There seems to be in many of the discussions a lack of clarity between what is happening in regions and how this can be shaped by the work of the national groups. How will the new framework deliver this in practice?
- What is relationship between: Defra biodiversity programme board, NE as lead delivery body, EBS, EBS SIGs, Who is lead biodiversity body?
- Do we have the resources to map everything?
- Do we need encyclopedia Britannia to be written before we decide the 10 most pressing priorities?
- We have regional biodiversity maps already, do we need regional interaction with each and every SIG vision? Does a region have the capacity to engage with this level of complexity?
- Lots of interaction between the SIGs in practice – how do we make the separate deliverables and visions joined up and messages and also meaningful to landowners
- What does success look like, how do you measure it, for high level policy deliverable
- How do we ensure that workstream aims / deliverables don't conflict?
- Must avoid referring issues back and forth and iteration could easily take 6-12 months, allowing for meeting schedules. Slowing up decision making
- From point of view of conservation advisors, landowner – how do we make sense of all these visions – maybe 4 or 5 of them relevant to large estate overkill?
- Why have factions of SIGs and BIGs been integrated for some workstreams but not others?
- Between workstreams, overall key messages help especially to the public must avoid confusion! Equally critical for landowner / manager who we want to deliver this
- When creating work plans for SIGs need to ensure cross linkages with other workstreams are picked up

- Need for communications deliverable to be closer to other 2010 deliverables
- Policy agenda moves so quickly e.g. on planning reform / eco-towns that difficult for SIGs to keep up with. How do we address that?
- The narrative is complex – simplifying is possible but not at the expense of clarity
- Deliverables need to have smart milestones
- Linkage / challenge – communication / interpretation / understanding between national level and what happens/is already happening in regions
- Functioning of SIGs – how is this assessed/reviewed? Timing, composition, ToR, ways of working, standardising best practice, relationship with BIG's, how to further simplify structures

Cross-Cutting

- Do cross-sectoral SIGs have sufficient delivery resources without a delivery agency?
- How do we make accountability for SIG deliverables stick?
- Can organisations commit staff resources and ££ to delivery
- How do all the SIGs co-ordinate their messages to regional / local, to avoid swamping the system
- Future role of L+R what is it? Do we need to do some planning – 2010 – how do we get maximum impact?
- Need to make use of EBG meetings and EBG resource to help SIGs overcome problems
- EBG agenda item on delivery at regional level needed – BAP – EBG linkage
- How do we co-ordinate the activities of EBG with other land use demands. It cannot operate in isolation (e.g. world trade, food security, land demands)
- X-cutting of SIGs continuity of membership strategic focus ability to do work

Actions

- Provide mechanism for informing workstreams regarding BAP policy priorities
- Clearer conduits for communication between workstreams and between local and regional delivery
- Improved guidance on BARS and feedback loop to be completed
- Work needed on each SIG communication deliverable; EPU could help on this but will need resources to help deliver
- Need to maintain focus on outcomes, success measures, and who needs to do what
- Use EH [EK – Elaine Kendal?] to double check climate change actions
- TCD SIG chair to refresh SIG membership and broker engagement with other SIGs, especially local and regional
- SIG chairs to promote leadership to deliver action rather than process more projects – less plans
- Rather than a review, is there a need for the chairs to agree and clarify the roles of the group and the linkages between the groups!
- Clarify SMART deliverables and policy statements of intent
- SIGs need to clarify how they function between meetings – e.g. rapid response to newly emerging issues
- Issues and risk log share across SIGs
- Where does responsibility for the planning system and government's planning reform agenda rest within the SIG structure?
- EPU – Share DCSF contacts initiatives for '09 – from CCA
- To put workplans on BARS– to identify key actions (not just high level deliverables)

Issues working with BARS

- Need to ensure we train new chairs/BARs reporters in the system
- Keeping information up to date
- Level of detail of the information
- Who can see what information
- Do we need an analysis of outputs and review of input requirements?
- Really important – now need to make it work
- Protocol guidance needed to enable it to help manage the programme
- Need to focus on making it work for us
- Double counting
- Consistency of approach on what/how much reported
- Biodiversity policy unit to give feedback on adequacy of our reporting
- Are you getting what you want?
- A good thing
- Complexity a barrier
- Not fully used because of complexity
- Little analysis at various levels
- Responsibility/ownership?
- Issue of double accounting eg where funders require entry as condition
- Need accreditation of people able to enter
- As regards EBS need to constrain electronically to ensure consistency