

**UK Biodiversity Reporting and Information Group**  
**8<sup>th</sup> Meeting – Defra, Whitehall Place West, London, Room G1**  
**11h00; 14 December 2005**  
**MINUTES**

**1. Present:**

Paul Rose (JNCC, Chair); Ant Maddock (JNCC, Secretariat); Pete Brotherton (EN); Sarah Webster (Defra); Joanna Drewitt (SE); Jim Munford (NBN); Julian Hughes (LINK); Robin Wynde (LINK); Liz Howe (CCW); Hilary Allison (LINK); Michelle Calnan (WA); Patrick Isaac (WA); Richard Weyl (DOENI); Gy Ovenden (RDS).

**Apologies:** Mike Meharg (DOENI); John Baxter (SNH); Judith Young (SE); Brigid Primrose (SNH); Diana Reynolds (WA).

Michele Calnan and Patrick Isaac from the Welsh Assembly were welcomed to their first BRIG meeting.

**2. Final acceptance of minutes of last meeting**

The minutes were accepted subject to changes to the recommendation of the name of the Species and Habitats Review "Candidate" list and the links between this list and the priority species being made.

**3. Actions from previous BRIG meeting (see attached)**

Actions 1, 3, 4, 7, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22 were completed.

Action 19: Paul told the BRAG Survey and Monitoring Sub-group that it is not BRIG's role to co-ordinate monitoring but the Sub-group said it was not BRAG's role to co-ordinate monitoring either. BRIG agreed that an agency or sub group needs to assume this responsibility.

Action 20: Paul discussed the difficulties in getting recommendations implemented with the BRAG Survey and Monitoring Sub-group. It was noted that funding for survey and monitoring was likely to be limited. The Environmental Research Funders Forum (ERFF) has set up a monitoring sub-group and Paul agreed to report back to BRIG on progress within the ERFF sub-group.

Actions 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 14 are on the agenda

**ACTION 1:** Richard to send the Irish priority species criteria to Ant

**ACTION 2:** Ant to circulate the Irish and the Scottish priority species criteria among BRIG

**4. Standing items**

4.1 Country groups (BRIG1205\_1\_country reports)

England

In answer to a question, it was noted that biodiversity linkages in England were effective and links with ODPM, ALGE, regional work, local authorities (e.g. comprehensive performance assessment) were cited as examples of getting biodiversity considered at all levels.

In addition to having implications for England, the NERC Bill has major implications for JNCC which include rewriting JNCC's special functions and having JNCC's way of working enshrined in legislation.

**ACTION 3:** Sarah to speak to colleagues to ensure that NERC Bill guidance has NGO input.

### Wales

Michele informed BRIG that Diana Reynolds was the Welsh Assembly replacement for Trish Fretten.

**ACTION 4:** Michele to circulate the Diana's contact details among BRIG

### Northern Ireland

Verbal report given on the day. Biodiversity work is done under the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy that has 75 actions including Species and Habitat Action Plans. The Northern Ireland priorities have been reviewed yielding 37 priority habitats and 271 species (listed on the website) and a biodiversity report was completed in autumn showing that marine areas were a concern.

A review of the Wildlife Order has been completed and recommends to include biodiversity considerations as a duty; to amalgamate the 26 district councils into 7; and that a new biodiversity agency be developed.

There are 8 LBAPs in place and the government pays a grant to set these up.

### Scotland

Verbal Report given on the day. The Scottish Biodiversity Implementation Team will be in place by January 2006. The Scottish list of priority species will be published on 15 December and includes 2180 priority species plus 30 species and habitats selected by the Scottish public. Extract from the press release: "The list is required to be published under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004. The work was overseen by scientists from the Scottish Biodiversity Forum who worked with consultants Scott Wilson and a wide network of specialists and experts who provided information and time to the process."

See:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2005/12/15110244>

[http://www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk/sbl\\_int.php?id=39&type=2&navID=93&pageref=sbl\\_int](http://www.biodiversityscotland.gov.uk/sbl_int.php?id=39&type=2&navID=93&pageref=sbl_int)

Scotland still has to decide the actions it will take and what to do with this list.

Scotland was also involved in the BBC's Breathing Spaces programme.

### 4.2 BRAG (BRIG1205\_2\_BRAG)

After three years, BRAG is now under review. Overall BRAG has identified research needs reasonably well but struggles to get funding. It is completing work on ecosystems and functions, genetics, and policy tools. Research strategies are published on the UK BAP website <http://www.ukbap.org.uk/BAPGroupPage.aspx?id=2>. BRAG is keen to consider the conservation of genetic and species diversity and SNH said that they were keen to contribute to this.

**ACTION 5:** Paul to refer to Richard Ferris the Scottish interest in BRAG's genetic and species work

**ACTION 6:** Paul to circulate the review group membership within BRIG once it is known

### 4.3 NBN

Verbal report given on the day. Jim to send his report for circulation.

### 4.4 BARS (BRIG1205\_3\_BARS)

BARS has moved from a developmental phase to one of implementation and Loriaza Davies and Megan Ellishaw have been appointed. The challenge is now to make the most of the data on BARS and to improve the reporting functions. Note that in the BARS report (BRIG1205\_3\_BARS) the date of the start of the 2005 Reporting Round should read October not September.

## **5. Feedback from Sub-groups and other work since last meeting 12h00**

### **5.1 Presentation on UK BAP Costings project**

Sarah gave a presentation of the costing work which is attached to the minutes.

A workshop will be held to discuss the results of this contract early in the New Year.

Costs will be disaggregated to country level

It was suggested that:

- There are numerous landscape scale actions being taken through the Water Framework Directive and therefore already being paid for. Therefore the relevant UK BAP priorities should link to this work.
- It will be important to feed the costings work into the Stern review on the economics of climate change and the Comprehensive Spending Review in 2007.

The costs of delivering SAPs and HAPs were good value considering how important they are for quality of life but there was a need to be careful of how they are presented, for example, by putting these costs into context of other government spending, such as support for agriculture. There also needs to be some thought on how this spending is explained. For example, some costs can be borne by changes in the management of government-owned land which would not increase current spending. The costs also should be explained in terms of cost effectiveness.

**ACTION 7:** All to send Sarah a list of interested audiences for the workshop on costings

**ACTION 8:** BRIG to discuss how to present these costs at the next meeting

### **5.2 Information Gap Sub-group**

The Information Sub-group was asked by Standing Committee to present a timetable to provide the information gap results based on the 2005 Reporting Round data. The sub-group agreed that it would be able to present the analysis to the Standing Committee at its next meeting on 5 April 2006.

**ACTION 9:** Information Sub-group to send the report to BRIG before sending it to the Standing Committee

### **5.3 2005 Reporting Sub-group (BRIG1205\_4\_Reporting)**

Robin reported that the reporting system on BARS was launched on schedule, overall the Reporting Round has been well received, is working well and the analysis has been planned. There has been a significant recent increase in the number of Lead Partners and LBAPs that are reporting. Nonetheless, the majority of reports still needed to be completed and signed off. The sub-group was following this up and had agreed prioritisation of the reporting questions for any Lead Partners who were unlikely to complete the whole exercise. It was acknowledged that despite our best efforts a number of Lead Partners would not report in 2005 and that we should look at who these Lead Partners were, how this compared to 2002 and if there were common characteristics. The Reporting Round is scheduled to end on 31 December but the Sub-group has a contingency to extend the deadline by 2 – 3 weeks if necessary; this decision will be taken the week before Christmas.

**ACTION 10:** The 2005 Reporting Sub-group to analyse the 2005 non-reporter data against the 2002 data and the cost of these plans

In terms of producing the 2005 Report and making most of the results, it was agreed that:

- JNCC and the 2005 Reporting Sub-group would analyse the data and write a draft report
- Defra would edit and produce the summary and the final report
- Defra would fund the “glossy” summary

As previously agreed all of the basic analyses will wherever possible be done for UK and country levels and this information will be provided to the country groups, they will also receive the raw data so that they can carry out any further analyses that they feel is appropriate.

**ACTION 11:** BRIG to emphasise that the UK and the countries should plan to make maximum use of the 2005 Reporting Round data.

#### 5.4 Targets Review Sub-group (BRIG1205 5 Targets)

There continues to be delays in the submission of new targets to the country groups but there is a deadline on 15 January for Lead Partners to submit their targets to the Targets Sub-group. The decision taken at the last BRIG meeting was reinforced; the Sub-group should focus on habitats and widespread species (the most expensive plans). So the Sub-group can assess the quality of the targets before sending them out for consultation, the Sub-group needs to know what the countries will look for (will they look at the text, the values, or the targets overall?). Concern and frustration was expressed that if let the timetable for target review stretched too far into 2006 some plans may lose impetus.

**ACTION 12:** The Targets Sub-group to consult the country groups on what aspects of the targets they will consider during their consultation

**ACTION 13:** After the 15 January 2006 deadline, the Targets Sub-group to email BRIG summarising the receipt of outstanding targets; BRIG to then decide on sending the targets for country consultation.

#### 5.5 Climate change Sub-group (BRIG1205 6 Climate change)

The work of the Climate Change Sub-group was well received by the Standing Committee. A draft will be available by Spring and the publication date is planned for the end of 2006.

**ACTION 14:** Devolved colleagues to consider funding the publishing costs and to report back to Hilary.

The Sub-group needs a new member with knowledge of UK BAP. It was suggested that someone attending the Monarch workshop on climate change implications for UK BAP species in March/April 2006 could fulfil this role.

**ACTION 15:** Hilary to consider the option of getting a new member at the March/April Monarch workshop

#### 5.6 Species & Habitat Priorities Review Sub-group (BRIG1205 7 SHR; BRIG1205 8 purpose & process)

The revised timetable for completion of Stage 1 which finished with the final Stage 1 list being sent to the Standing Committee by the end of March 2006 was presented to BRIG and was acknowledged. The issue of continuing to keep everyone informed, especially the country groups, of this work was again emphasised, although it was recognised that representatives from each country had been involved in the expert groups. PSHRWG would like clarification from BRIG as to its future after Stage 1, recognising that a different membership may be appropriate to complete the review.

**ACTION 16:** Ant to send out the updated list of country agency and country group contacts.

**ACTION 17:** PSHRWG to attach list of list of people who had been consulted in generating the Stage 1 lists as part of final output from Stage 1

**ACTION 18:** Paul to write to PSHRWG explaining what Standing Committee had charged him to do and the implications of this for the future of PSHRWG.

Paul referred to the update from BRIG then discussed the summary of ideas on the UK Standing Committee. Following from ideas discussed at remaining stages of the review that had emerged, meetings between JNCC, Defra and Link are working on a paper looking at how to take Stages 2 and 3 of the review forward. It was emphasised that the ideas developed by PSHRWG also need to feed into this thinking. In discussion, it was felt that some illustrative examples of possible delivery mechanisms would help develop the thinking on this matter. There is a need to recognise that high level implementation of priorities in each country would be guided by the sectoral approach within each country strategy. Pete asked how this would be done and Gy asked if this would duplicate work/discussions already undertaken within the PSHRWG. Paul replied that this would be working down from a strategic level, such as the land use sectors in the biodiversity strategies. It was agreed that the summary paper would be re-written to provide further clarity of the work proposed and circulated.

**ACTION 19:** Paul to rewrite his summary paper, to circulate this to BRIG and to the PSHRWG for consultation.

**ACTION 20:** Paul to draft the ToR for the new PSHRWG chair

**ACTION 21:** JNCC to complete the illustrative example and to present this to a small workshop in the first two weeks of February 2006. Representatives of BRIG, the country groups and PSHRWG to be invited.

## **6. New items**

### **6.1 Communicating Standing Committee decisions to BRIG and subgroups**

It was drawn to the attention of BRIG that there was a need to formalise Standing Committee decisions. To achieve this, it was agreed to have a UK report under the Standing Items and to table the country reports without discussion.

**ACTION 22:** BRIG agendas to have a UK report presented by Sarah summarising the Standing Committee meeting

### **6.2 Future work for BRIG**

There was insufficient time to discuss this item. However, this was an important item and had been on the agenda for three meetings without discussion. Comments at today's meeting included: "no decisions are taken by BRIG"; "no-one attends BRIG meetings"; "is UK BAP working?"; and "BRIG is overly bureaucratic" suggesting frustration and a clear need to discuss the future work of BRIG. It was agreed that this be discussed at the next meeting.

## **7. Next meeting**

London, 14 March 2006. Venue to be decided.

## **UK Biodiversity Reporting and Information Group**

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## Review of the Costs of Delivering the Biodiversity Action Plan

### Review of the Costs of Delivering the Biodiversity Action Plan

Contractors:

GHK Consulting Ltd and RPS Ecology Ltd



### Funders of the project

- English Nature - £12,500
- Scottish Executive - £10,000
- Environment and Heritage Service, Northern Ireland - £8,000
- Welsh Assembly - £3,000
- Defra - £74,400

Total: £107,900



### Key Tasks

- Review of HAP costings, revising cost estimates for each HAP
- Review of SAP costings, based on sample of SAPs
- New assessment of SAP costs at the landscape scale, excluded from the earlier costings
- Review of BAP funding, to compare costs with current expenditures
- Present findings as model that can be updated in future



### HAP Costings

- **First stage – methodological study involving six case studies.**
  - **Concluded that earlier costings were out of date, often had wrong focus, and did not form a sound basis for estimating future costs – need for a complete review, streamlining approach where possible**
- **Review has revised costs of each individual HAP**
- **Focus on habitat management, restoration and recreation targets which account for 95% of costs, except for aquatic/coastal/ marine where action-based approach needed**
- **General conclusion – indicative costings were underestimates**



### SAP Costings Review

- **Earlier indicative costings put SAP costs at only £8m pa compared to HAPs £130m pa**
- **Review has reassessed individual SAP costs (based on sample) as well as developing new approach to cost habitat actions for widespread species (previously excluded)**
- **Review of individual SAP costings suggests total costs of approx. £30m pa 2006-2011**



### Wider countryside species

- **To deliver the landscape scale changes required by these species:**
- **~ £500 million per annum 2006-2010**
- **Modelled on the basis of the extent of agri- environment and forestry schemes required UK wide to achieve 8 out of 10 high priority farmland bird targets**



### Funding Review

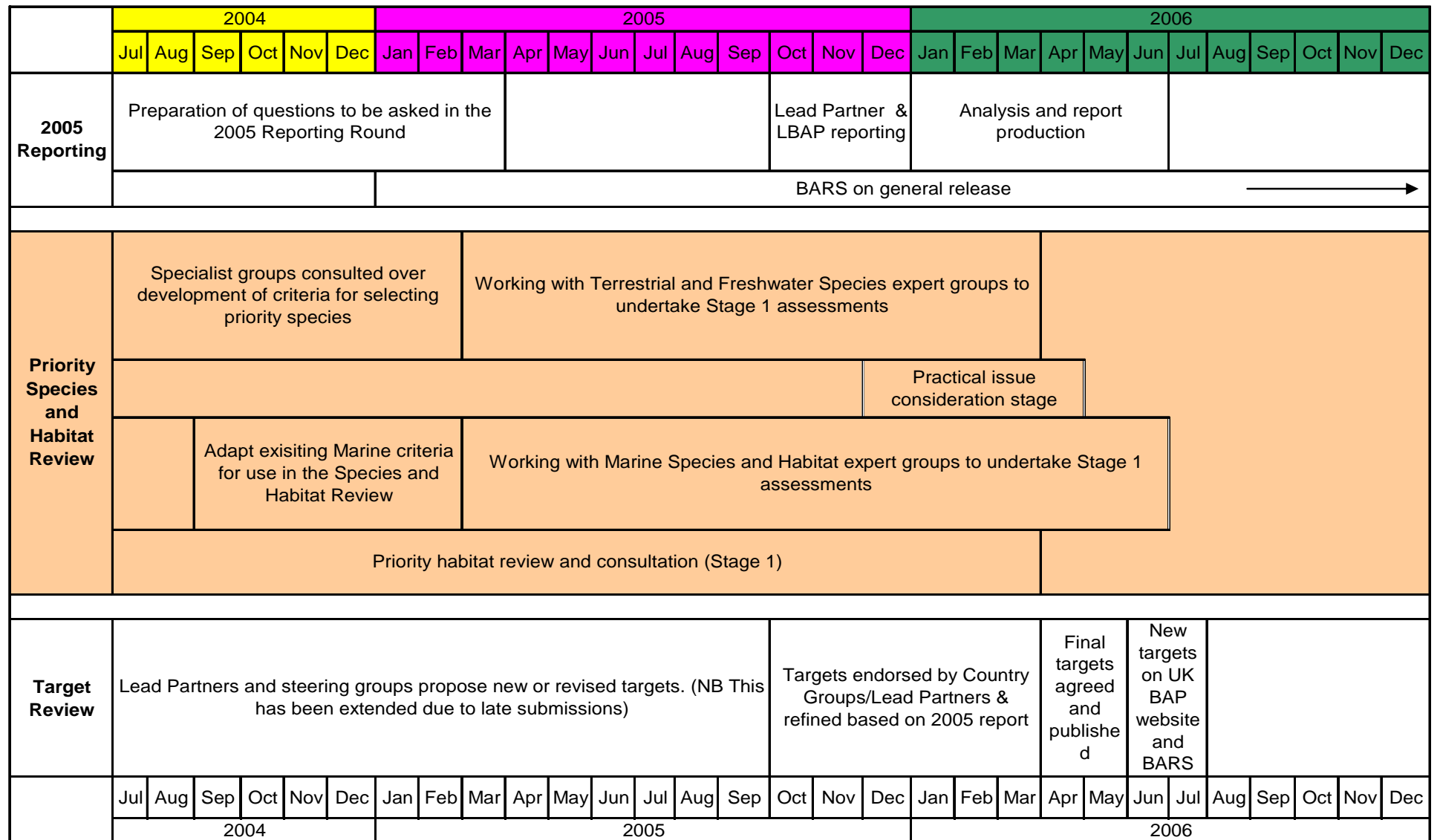
- Review is assessing current expenditures at the aggregate level to compare with costs and assess any funding gap
- Data collected by different departments, agencies and organisations across the UK
- Results not yet finalised but suggest significant gap between current spend and estimated costs



### Next steps

- **Draft report by Christmas 2005**
- **Seminar earlier in 2006 to present and discuss findings**
- **Revisions in 2006 to reflect consultation and ongoing targets review**





**Figure 1.** Main BRIG milestones. The main sub-group work programmes as listed on the left and the details of the work within these sub-groups is listed in the body of the Figure.