

DRAFT MINUTES
Priority Species and Habitats Review Working Group (PSHRWG)
10th Meeting, Tuesday 13 September 2005 10.30 – 16.15
JNCC Peterborough, Monkstone house

1. Welcome and introductions

Present: Joanna Drewitt, SEERAD (Chair); Ant Maddock JNCC (Minutes); Nikki Chapman JNCC; Margaret Palmer Wildlife & Countryside Link; ; Pete Brotherton EN; Jane Sears Wildlife & Countryside Link; Nicola Hutchinson Wildlife & Countryside Link; Fred Rumsey National History Museum; Deb Procter JNCC; Nigel Bourn Wildlife & Countryside Link; Gy Ovenden Defra; Ed Mountford JNCC; Melanie Hardy JNCC; Dave Chambers JNCC.

Telephone conference: Liz Howe CCW; Ian Strachan JNCC; Brigid Primrose SNH;

Apologies: Chris Cheffings JNCC; Lynne Farrell SNH; Steve Chambers WAG; Aisling Carrick WAG; Stephen Grady JNCC.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of 5 May 2005 were accepted.

Actions from previous meeting:

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| 1, 3, 4, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14. | Done |
| 2, 5 | On agenda |
| 7, 8 | Chris Cheffings on leave |
| 10 | Targets groups to send all species that are being recommended for removal from UK BAP priority list to Ant. All species that “passed” the Stage 1 criteria should be included as Candidates. During subsequent stages species could be removed from the candidates list if necessary e.g. <i>Limonium</i> . |

3. Contacts list

Joanna had asked the contacts to send her a list of all coordinators in their groups, particularly all country agency coordinators. The following is a review of the country agency coordinators by group.

Birds

Andy Dows from SNH will join the Bird group. No reply from Northern Ireland.

Herps

No reply from John Milburn (NI)

Mammals

Full representation from the country agencies

Vascular plants

Mark Wright (NI) had not joined the group

Bryophytes

Action 1: LIZ TO CHECK THAT ALAN HALE (CCW) IS ON THIS GROUP

Lichens

There is a gap with the Scottish representative because Anna Griffith has left SNH

Fungi

There is no Scottish rep

Action 2: BRIGID TO FOLLOW UP AN SNH CONTACT FOR BOTH LICHENS AND FUNGI

Invertebrates

In Stage 1 the country agencies are happy to be represented by Deb Procter however the country agencies want to become more engaged with the process during the next stages.

Action 3: DEB TO GIVE ANT A LIST OF THE COUNTRY AGENCY PEOPLE ON THE INVERTEBRATE STEERING GROUP

Fish

No report

Marine

CCW is well represented. EN and SNH have endorsed the process but are not represented because they are understaffed. George Lees (SNH) will attend future meetings. No attendance from Joe Breen (NI).

Habitats

The country agencies are engaged in the habitats review.

Action 4: IAN TO EXTRACT ALL THE COUNTRY AGENCY REPS FROM THE HAP STEERING GROUP LIST AND SEND TO ANT

Action 5: PETE TO MENTION AT THE NEXT STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING THAT NORTHERN IRELAND IS NOT ENGAGING IN THE SPECIES AND HABITATS REVIEW

4. Feedback/updates on Stage 1 from the contacts

The PSHRWG again endorsed the publication of the candidate list in March 2006 and discussion centred on achieving this.

Because presenting a candidate list of several hundred species would not be acceptable without explaining how these species could be grouped and made more efficient. This thinking therefore needs to be included in the publication of the candidate list in March 2006 and supported with examples.

Birds

On track to meet the deadline. The data have been processed but there are two main issues (taxonomic level to be used (full species or sub-species) and deciding on which population trend data to adopt where there is more than one source for a given species) that will be resolved at the next meeting.

Action 6: DAVE GIBBONS TO TRY TO GET ALL BIRD DATA ONTO THE PROFORMA AND TO LET DAVE CHAMBERS KNOW IF HE NEEDS ANY DATA MANAGEMENT HELP

Herps

On track to meet the deadline.

Action 7: LIZ TO SEND A LIST OF THE HERP SUBMISSIONS TO PSHRWG

Mammals

On track to meet the deadline. Several pending reports will fill the gaps. The mammal group raised the issue of species that just miss the criteria thresholds. The PSHRWG said these would not qualify as candidates but an eye should be kept on these species. This status will also be registered in the database.

Vascular plants

On track to meet the deadline after resolving some difficulties. Will discuss Stage 2 in January.

Other plants and Fungi

Progressing well. The application for funds to help the group develop a candidate list has been approved.

Invertebrates

On track to meet the deadline.

Fish

No report but they will meet soon to do the work.

Marine

Will not meet the deadline. The quality of the 232 submissions received was poor and there are few data to support the criteria. Experts also have insufficient time to do this work so Nikki has to do the work herself but is also time constrained. A solution proposed by Nikki was to get funding to contract the work out. Nevertheless, this work will take about 6 months.

The PSHRWG felt that submission of an incomplete list of candidates, based on what data were available, would be the best option for the marine group. The marine group rejected this idea.

The PSHRWG agreed:

- Nikki needs to discuss the problem of gathering support from coordinators with other contacts who may have dealt with similar problems. In particular, Buglife (Nigel Bourn) volunteered to offer advice where possible.
- Nikki should apply for funding, supported by a costed project proposal, as a matter of urgency
- To accept an incomplete list of marine candidates
- To write to the marine group listing options (an incomplete list of candidates; retaining the current list of UK BAP priorities; developing a process to best deal with the poor data e.g. identifying current UK BAP priorities species that should be removed from the list, identifying essential current priorities, identifying any new priorities)
- Not to change any deadlines

Action 8: PSHRWG TO WRITE TO THE MARINE GROUP LISTING OPTIONS FOR SUBMISSION OF THE UK BAP CANDIDATE LIST BY DEADLINE

Action 9: PSHRWG TO REQUEST THE STANDING COMMITTEE IF THE MARINE GROUP CAN PROCEED WITH A DIFFERENT DEADLINE TO THE REST OF THE SPECIES AND HABITATS REVIEW PROCESS

Habitats

HAP chairs are meeting next week. Some habitat groups are making more progress than others but this is not a problem. They require more involvement from the species groups to advise about inclusion of particular habitat types.

Action 10: WHEN A CHANGE IN DEFINITION OF A HABITAT RESULTS IN A CHANGE IN EXTENT THIS WOULD HAVE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COST OF THE PLAN. THE HABITATS GROUP MUST KEEP THE PSHRWG, THE COUNTRY ADMINISTRATIONS AND DEFRA'S COSTINGS EXERCISE INFORMED OF THE COST IMPLICATIONS OF THESE CHANGES.

Action 11: PETE TO SEND IAN THE CONTACT DETAILS FOR DEFRA'S COSTINGS EXERCISE

Action 12: IAN TO ASK THE HAP CHAIRS IF THEY HAVE BEEN CONTACTED BY PEOPLE DOING DEFRA'S COSTINGS EXERCISE

Action 13: PETE TO SEND TO PSHRWG THE SPEC OF DEFRA'S COSTINGS EXERCISE

Action 14: JNCC HABITATS TEAM TO ENSURE CONSISTENT USE OF CRITERIA AMONG ALL HABITATS BEFORE REVISED HABITATS ARE SENT TO THE COUNTRY GROUPS

Andy Brown from, attended the meeting to present his view of the Species and Habitats Review process. After a long discussion it was made clear that the PSHRWG should ensure that there is consistency in the use of the criteria among the groups. This is difficult since much of the flexibility within the process was purposeful to allow engagement of both the data-poor and the data-rich groups. Nonetheless, the PSHRWG would examine the data to see if the flexible use of the criteria could be a problem.

Action 15: DAVE AND ANT TO EXAMINE HOW THE CRITERIA HAVE BEEN USED ACROSS THE GROUPS, PARTICULARLY FOCUSING ON CRITERION 4, WITH A VIEW TO IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL PROBLEMS. THIS INCLUDES THE DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY, DISCREPANCIES IN THE DATA, ESTABLISHING IF ANY STAGE 2 QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN USED AND, IF SO, WHERE, AND TO SEE IF SPECIES HAVE BEEN LINKED TO PARTICULAR HABITATS.

5. Structure of the Group

Joanna announced her resignation as chair of the group as stage 2 will have more emphasis on process than on ecology and therefore needs someone with process experience. Joanna will continue to work in the group as an ordinary member. The PSHRWG thanked her for her excellent and hard work.

It was suggested that the next chair could be someone from one of the countries other than England. Because of the need during Stage 2 for the PSHRWG to work closely with the countries, other suggestions were that the chair be familiar with country administration responsibilities, process and be fairly senior.

Action 16: FORWARD SUGGESTIONS ABOUT THE QUALITIES OF A NEW CHAIR TO BRIG

6. Stage 2 discussion

The PSHRWG agreed that there was merit in merging Stages 2 and 3. This had been discussed in previous meetings under the theme of iteration and several expert groups were now discussing Stages 2 and 3.

The PSHRWG agreed to examine the Species and Habitats Review data to see to what extent any Stage 2 questions had been included in Stage 1. See Action Point 15.

The Invertebrate Group was developing a "Vision" of Stage 3 implementation mechanisms and would circulate this to the PSHRWG once this work was complete.

Action 17: THE INVERTEBRATE GROUP TO CIRCULATE THEIR "VISION" OF STAGE 3 TO THE PSHRWG

Action 18: OTHER MEMBERS OF THE PSHRWG TO CIRCULATE IDEAS ABOUT STAGE 3 TO THE PSHRWG DIRECTLY

7. Dates of Future Meetings

It was agreed that the theme of the next meeting would be to discuss a paper that would be submitted to the PSHRWG before hand outlining how Stage 1 criteria were used. This would paper would include the analysis referred to in Action Point 15, explain the next steps in finalising the publication of the candidate list in March 2006 and explain how the candidate species would be treated in the merged Stages 2 and 3.

The paper would be drafted in time for final consultation at the next meeting on 1 December 2005 and then would be submitted as the final Stage 1 report to BRIG.

1 December 2005 – JNCC, Peterborough – to be chaired by Gy Ovenden if no permanent chair is elected
22 February 2006, London.