

LEAD PARTNER AND LBAP GUIDANCE NOTE

Biodiversity Reporting for 2005

FEBRUARY 2005



Biodiversity Reporting for 2005

An information note for Lead Partners and Local Biodiversity Action Plan Coordinators from the Biodiversity Reporting and Information Group (BRIG).

In 2005, there will be a UK-wide reporting round for national and local BAPs. This guidance note has been produced to inform Lead Partners, Lead Agencies and LBAPs of their part in the reporting process. It explains why this reporting round is taking place, what information will be asked for, when and how the information will be collected and how the data will be used. It is hoped that the early production of this note assists everyone involved in reporting to plan their work and so help the process run as smoothly and efficiently as possible.

1. Introduction to reporting in 2005.

Reviewing and reporting progress is one of the key elements of the individual UK species and habitat action plans, LBAPs and the overall UK Biodiversity Action Plan. At the inception of the UK BAP, a three year reporting cycle was agreed. This timeframe is considered to provide adequate, regular checks on progress while avoiding the burden of annual reporting. The UK Biodiversity Partnership Standing Committee has recently endorsed this approach. This will be the third reporting round, following on from 1999 and 2002. BAP reporting rounds have several functions and benefits including:

- Allowing us to assess how much progress is being made towards targets, learn from successes and address any problems. Many Lead Partners, steering groups and local biodiversity partnerships will carry out a review on an annual basis but for those that do not, this reporting round will provide an opportunity to examine what has been achieved and what else needs to be done.
- Reporting on all priority species and habitats and by all LBAPs enables the devolved biodiversity administrations to assess which issues are affecting a wide range of plans and where action at a policy level would be most effective.
- Many SAPs and HAPs contain targets that expire in 2005. Information from reporting on these targets, and on the latest status of priority habitats and species, will enable progress to be assessed against one of the Government's 'Quality of Life Counts' indicators of sustainable development; progress with biodiversity action plans. We are also just five years away from the date of our commitments, made at European and international levels, to halting biodiversity loss in the UK by 2010.
- Information from the 2005 reporting round will also help to inform the review of UK BAP targets that is currently underway and will provide useful context for the review of BAP priority species and habitats (see links provided at the end of this guidance).

We have tried to design a reporting system that provides the relevant information, is easy to use and is not too onerous. We have built on the experience from 2002 and tried to make further improvements. As well as providing crucial biological information, we aim to use reporting to help foster communication between local, national and UK BAP practitioners. It is the knowledge, commitment, time and energy of people that can make the biodiversity process work. We hope it will help to keep alive the enthusiasm of the thousands of individuals on whom BAP delivery depends.

2. What information will you be asked for in 2005?

The development of the Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS) will enable integrated national and local reporting on species and habitats in 2005. This follows on from the success of the web-based system used for 2002 reporting. We will request information from Lead Partners for all the UK Species and Habitat Action Plans and from all Local Biodiversity Action Plan partnerships.

2.1 Information from Lead Partners

The following information will be requested from Lead Partners and, where applicable, steering groups:

- **Status.** The most accurate assessment of the status of the species or habitat in the UK and in each relevant country, including an indication of accuracy and source. You will also be asked to indicate whether there is adequate baseline information for each country.
- **Trend.** Best estimate of recent trend for UK and each relevant country. You will also be asked to indicate whether there is adequate monitoring in place in each relevant country.
- **Knowledge.** An assessment of whether we know enough to deliver plan targets and if not what sort of research is needed.
- **Progress towards targets.** Quantified assessment of progress for the UK and relevant countries. Lead Partners will be able to draw on information relevant to their species or habitat entered onto BARS at national and local levels to make this assessment.
- **Threats.** An assessment of factors likely to pose a significant threat over the next five years. This differs from the previous reporting which included an assessment of current factors causing loss or decline.
- **Constraints.** Identify the main obstacles to achieving targets and the likely solutions to these.
- **Links to LBAPs.** Assessment of interaction with LBAPs, how this has changed since 2002, how it could be improved and what the Lead Partner considers the LBAP's most important role for the relevant species/habitat to be.
- **Successes.** Assessment of what the key successes have been in plan implementation and what the important factors were in their achievement.

2.2 Information from Local Biodiversity Action Plans

The release of BARS provides the BAP community with a dynamic reporting system, enabling information on habitat and species delivery to be updated at any time. LBAPs should use BARS to enter habitat and species targets, actions and outcomes, including locally held information on status and trends. Automated reports will make this information readily accessible to Lead Partners, enabling them to make an overall assessment of progress towards targets using both national and local data. BRIG and Country Groups will be able to analyse these data directly to assess LBAPs' role in enhancing local priority species and habitats.

In addition to these habitat and species data, the following information will be requested to assess other aspects of LBAP progress:

- **Links to Lead Partners.** An assessment of whether contact has changed since 2002, an indication of where there has been good contact (good practice examples), a list of species or habitats where more contact/information is required and ideas on how communication might be enhanced.
- **Successes.** Up to six examples of successes (other than those relating specifically to UK priority species or habitats) in the implementation of the LBAP since 2002 (good practice examples).
- **Integration with local plans and policies.** An assessment of progress on how the LBAP is influencing local plans and policies (e.g. community strategies/plans, development planning, performance management, agri-environment prioritisation etc.).
- **Constraints.** An assessment of the most significant constraints to achieving LBAP targets.

3. How and when will the information be collected?

All reporting data will be collected using the Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS). Prior knowledge and use of BARS will not be required (although we hope that most Lead Partners and LBAPs will already be using this system).

Forms will be designed to provide simple and easy provision of data using drop down menus and tick boxes wherever possible. Free text options will be limited to enable analysis to be carried out quickly and efficiently. Reporting forms will be trialled with some Lead Partners and LBAPs before they are finalised.

LBAPs should start populating BARS with their action plan information, including species and habitats targets and successes, now. **It is particularly important that information on progress on priority species and habitats is entered by LBAPs before the end of September 2005.** We will send out a reminder on this to LBAPs in July. The additional information on links to Lead Partners, plan/policy integration and constraints will be requested in October 2005 (we will send out a reminder at this time). LBAPs will have until the end of December 2005 to provide this information.

Lead Partners can also start using BARS for recording their work programme now, but the information set out above (section 2.1) will be requested in **October 2005** (we will send out a reminder at this time). The deadline for the completion of all reporting forms in BARS will be **31 December 2005**. The reason for this phased timetable is to ensure as much information from LBAPs on species and habitat work as possible is available to Lead Partners in compiling their reports.

The 2005 reporting responses will be analysed in early 2006 and the results of this work will be made available in the form of a short written report and a more detailed searchable report on the UK BAP website. These reports will be available by **June 2006**; this should be in time for the annual UK biodiversity partnership meeting.

Important dates	
From January 2005	LBAPs are able to start entering information into BARS on their targets and actions.
End February 2005	LBAPs to have entered information on their targets for UK priority habitats and species, to feed into the UK Targets Review.
July – September 2005	LBAPs to ensure all appropriate information on progress on priority species and habitats is entered.
October – December 2005	LBAPs to answer questions on links to LPs, other successes, integration and constraints (2.2 above)
October – December 2005	Lead Partners to complete their questions (2.1 above).
Spring 2006	Analysis of responses.
June 2006	Reports available on UK BAP website.

For further information contact:

Ant Maddock, JNCC, Monkstone House, City Road, Peterborough, PE1 1JY

E mail: ant.maddock@jncc.gov.uk

Phone: 01733 866827

Fax: 01733 555948

Useful links:

For information on the Priority List review go to:

www.ukbap.org.uk/BAPGroupPage.aspx?id=16

For information on the UK BAP Targets review go to:

<http://www.ukbap.org.uk/BAPGroupPage.aspx?id=65>

For information on BARS, go to

<https://www.ukbap-reporting.org.uk/default.asp>