

UK Biodiversity Reporting and Information Group
7th Meeting – Edinburgh, Victoria Quay, Conference room 11
16 May 2005 11h30
MINUTES

1. Present:

Paul Rose (JNCC, Chair); Ant Maddock (JNCC, Secretariat); Pete Brotherton (EN); Sarah Webster (Defra); Judith Young (SE); Joanna Drewitt (SE); Cathy Stobo (SE); Jim Munford (NBN); Trish Fretten (WAG); Brigid Primrose (SNH); Julian Hughes (LINK); Robin Wynde (LINK); Liz Howe (CCW); Hilary Allison (LINK).

Apologies: Mike Meharg (DOENI); John Baxter (SNH).

Paul reported that Deryck was much better but it is still unknown when he will be back at work. Paul also advised that during consideration of the actions arising from the Standing Committee's last meeting in March we develop a clear, shared view of the steps needed to take these actions forward.

2. Final acceptance of minutes of last meeting

The minutes were accepted with minor changes. One change was to make the meaning of the WSSD and Gothenburg 2010 targets clear. There was some discussion of how to achieve these targets and Paul said he would present these at the next meeting.

ACTION 1: Ant to make the changes to the minutes and place the minutes on the UK BAP website

ACTION 2: At the next BRIG meeting, Paul to present the actions being taken to meet the 2010 targets

3. Actions from previous BRIG meeting (see attached)

OLD ACTION 1: Pete has sent the habitat data to BRIG members. The English data showed an increased number of habitats with baseline data and with monitoring schemes suggesting that the information gap was being reduced. Pete was going to meet the JNCC habitats team to agree how to proceed.

OLD ACTIONS 2-10: Achieved.

ACTION 3: The 2005 Reporting Round article, or an appropriately updated version of this article, and similar articles to be sent to all national Biodiversity News contacts. Contact Scott Mathieson and Julia Korn

OLD ACTION 11: Deferred to the agenda item on the Species and Habitat Review

OLD ACTION 12: Achieved

OLD ACTION 13: BARS would be used to perform this task.

ACTION 4: BARS administration to give JNCC access to the contact list

OLD ACTION 17: Sarah reported that some of the comments on biodiversity and the UK BAP in the UK Sustainable Development Strategy had been included but not all. BRIG agreed that country groups are well suited to fit in with the sustainable development agenda and there was a need to increase the profile of biodiversity with the sustainable development fraternity.

ACTION 5: Sustainable development to be placed on the agenda of the next BRIG meeting; BRIG to think about how well it can link into sustainable development and what can be done

4. Feedback from Sub-groups and other work since last meeting

Paul thanked all the sub-groups on the good work they had done and progress achieved.

4.1 Information Gap Sub-group

Ant reported that the a summary of the telephone survey had been sent to the Standing Committee who requested more work to identify where there were information gaps that make it impossible to review the priority status of species or habitats. The Information Gap Sub-group felt this work had already been presented to the Standing Committee and within 6 to 8 months up-to-date information would be available for a more accurate assessment of the extent of the information gap.

Since BRIG did not have the executive authority to solve the problems that the gap analysis had identified, BRIG wanted to know what could be done, by whom, to resolve the information gap. Without this information, BRIG felt it was very difficult to present the work appropriately.

ACTION 6: The Information Gap sub-group to present a clearly written summary report of its work to the Standing Committee with general recommendations for actions subject to a caveat that these results be updated by the 2005 Reporting Round and the Species and Habitat Review results.

4.2 2005 Reporting Sub-group (BRIG0505_1_2005 Reporting)

The 2005 reporting round paper sent to the Standing Committee had been accepted. The BARS reporting system would be examined during the sub-group's meeting next week and a trial of the system would be planned during this meeting.

4.3 Species and Habitat Priorities Review Sub-group (BRIG0505_2_SHR)

All three guidance notes have been sent out (Terrestrial & Freshwater Habitats, Terrestrial & Freshwater Species and Marine Species and Habitats) and are on the web. The deadline for Stage 1 submissions to get to the contacts is September 2005. Analysis would start as soon as the information is received.

Some of the countries showed surprise when informed that they would be involved in the Species and Habitat Review in a large way. It was then noted that better communication was required because not all stages of the Species and Habitat Review were well understood. This better communication included explaining the process of the Species and Habitat Review to country groups from the start.

Joanna raised three questions: What to call the list produced by Stage 1?

The main consideration is that many lists cause confusion and so we should try to avoid their unnecessary proliferation. We need to explain that a single list can be maintained in a spreadsheet format with a list of species and attributes (UK BAP priority, red listed, IUCN category *etc*). This important database can be maintained but is not a Species of Conservation Concern list. Perhaps it is the Designations Database?

The product of Stage 1 (Candidate list) of the Species and Habitat Review will be UK SHOCC (Species and Habitats of Conservation Concern) linked through the NBN species dictionary. This name was agreed by BRIG as the most appropriate name for this list.

ACTION 7: Jim to consider the linking of the UK SHOCC list and NBN

ACTION 8: JNCC should decide on a new name for the former SOCC list (the spreadsheet) that reflects its inclusion of a large number of species on various designations.

When any of the lists would be published?

BRIG agreed that the UK SHOCC list would be published when it was completed and signed off by the UK Partnership/Country Groups.

ACTION 9: BRIG to recommend to the Standing Committee that the UK SHOCC list should be published as soon as it had been signed off by the UK Standing Committee.

How to link the expertise from Stage 1 and Stage 2?

For Stage 2, more buy-in is required from country groups and different actions are required, therefore the composition of the existing sub-group will change. However, the new sub-group needs to maintain strong links with the Stage 1 scientifically-based sub-group currently chaired by Joanna. The plan is to get Stage 2 guidance out as soon as possible to ensure that the stages are well linked.

ACTION 10: Priority Species & Habitat Review Working Group to see if a Stage 2 guidance note is needed

Guidance on the process to be followed:

- Stage 2 will be conducted at a UK level but...
- The Priority Species & Habitat Review Working Group should continue to involve the country groups in Stage 1 as it does now and continue this through Stage 2.
- The sub-group should enhance communication with the country groups individually to keep them informed of the Species and Habitat Review process.
- The key mechanism for this will be for the country representatives on the Priority Species & Habitat Review Working Group to keep their country groups informed of the process being followed and to ensure that this information goes through all levels of the partnership. This would be facilitated by the Country agencies, and JNCC offered to help this communication where needed.
- Overall the country groups need to be happy with what is proposed at a UK level and the implications for each country. This should be encouraged by explaining and acknowledging that there has been considerable country expertise and input to Stage 1 (as there will be for Stage 2 and 3). We should credit the ability of the specialist groups in making reasonable assessments of UK status. The sub-group, assisted by JNCC, needs to achieve this as efficiently as possible.

ACTION 11: The Priority Species & Habitat Review Working Group to carry out the process to engage the country groups in the manner suggested above

ACTION 12: The Country agencies to develop communication between the Priority Species & Habitat Review Working Group and the country groups, with assistance from JNCC where needed.

It was asked how Scotland could reconcile their steps to develop a Scottish list of priority species by January 2006 with the UK process. JNCC volunteered to help with this if requested.

ACTION 13: Judith to email the Scottish Species and Habitat Review criteria to BRIG

4.4 Targets Review Sub-group

BRIG agreed that before the country group consultation stage of the targets, the sub-group should ensure that targets for at least all major habitat groups and widespread species had been processed. Because the country groups need only to be happy with which targets are proposed and the implications for the countries, the country consultation period can be reduced to the period between late July and August.

DECISION: The country consultation period is reduced to late July to August

ACTION 14: Submitted targets to be sent out for country group consultation once at least all major habitat groups and widespread species have been received

4.5 Climate change Sub-group (BRIG0505_3 Climate Change)

The scoping work requested by the Standing Committee was done and submitted to BRIG. The sub-group should now focus on terrestrial work and should consider publishing the product as a web page which can easily be converted to document form.

ACTION 15: Detailed comments on the scoping to be sent to Hilary by 27 May 2005

ACTION 16: Hilary to send the final scoping list to the Standing Committee by 1 June 2005

4.6 Review timeline update (Figure 1)

ACTION 17: Chairs to send Ant the updates for the timetable as soon as possible.

5. **Standing items**

Country groups

England: paper submitted to group before the meeting.

Wales: The next Welsh Biodiversity Partnership meeting will be held on 31 June 2005. There has been some reorganising of the Welsh group and movement of Trish's team to Aberystwyth.

Scotland: Katrina Mannion has moved to Defra and interviewing for the Scottish Strategy Implementation team has started but probably will not be filled for three months. There was much work going on to generate the Scottish list of priority species and with the Biodiversity Action Grant Scheme.

ACTION 18: Standing Items to be moved to first on the agenda

5.1 BRAG (BRIG0505_4 BRAG)

The BRAG was frustrated because it makes research recommendations but no-one takes these any further. Perhaps there is a need for this group and BRIG to work together more.

ACTION 19: Paul to tell the BRAG Survey and Monitoring Sub-group that it is not BRIG's role to co-ordinate monitoring

ACTION 20: Paul to set up a discussion with the BRAG Survey and Monitoring Sub-group about mutual difficulties in getting recommendations implemented

5.2 NBN

NBN has appointed a business analyst, Geoff Johnson, to translate users' needs into actions. He will attend BRIG meetings if Jim cannot. Technical developments include planning to embed NBN into other websites to increase NBN usage indirectly, and to link NBN and BARS. NBN are funding a harlequin ladybird project for a year to develop an invasive species model and investigating non-technical barriers to using NBN by detail the money country agencies give to volunteers and explore if this can be improved.

5.3 Revision of Standing Items to be reported at BRIG – BARS?

We agreed that BARS should be included as a standing item.

6. **Any other business?**

6.1 Presentation of BRIG's work at the UK BAP Partnership Conference 14-15 June.

ACTION 21: Paul to send a draft of the UK BAP Partnership meeting presentation to BRIG members for comment prior to the Partnership meeting

7. **Date of next meeting**

As several people had needed to leave before the end of the meeting Paul suggested that the date for the next meeting would be agreed by e mail.

ACTION 22: Agree date for next meeting by e mail.

UK Biodiversity Reporting and Information Group

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	2004						2005												2006											
	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2005 Reporting	Preparation of questions to be asked in the 2005 Reporting Round												Lead Partner and LBAP reporting			Analysis and report production														
							BARS on general release																							
Priority Species and Habitat Review	Specialist groups consulted over development of criteria for selecting priority species						Working with Terrestrial and Freshwater Species expert groups to undertake Stage 1 assessments						Practical issue consideration (Stage 2)						Development of conservation action and implementation mechanisms for Terrestrial and Freshwater Species, Marine Species and Habitats and Terrestrial and Freshwater Habitats (Stage 3)											
			Adapt existing Marine criteria for use in the Species and Habitat Review				Working with Marine Species and Habitat expert groups to undertake Stage 1 assessments						Practical issue consideration (Stage 2)																	
	Priority habitat review and consultation (Stages 1 & 2)																													
Target Review	Lead Partners and steering groups propose new or revised targets												Consultation on proposals involving Country Groups, key partner organisations, LBAPs and regional fora				Targets endorsed by UKSC and Country Groups		Refinement of target values after 2005 reporting			Final targets agreed and published								
	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2004						2005												2006												