

**MINUTES**  
**Priority Species and Habitats Review Working Group (PSHRWG)**  
**15<sup>th</sup> Meeting, Tuesday 1 August 2006 10h00 – 16.00**  
**Victoria Quay, Edinburgh**

**1. Welcome and introductions**

**Present:** Steve Lee-Bapty Defra (Chair) Ant Maddock JNCC (Secretariat); Joanna Drewitt, SEERAD; Paul Rose JNCC; Margaret Palmer Wildlife & Countryside Link; Nikki Chapman JNCC; Liz Howe CCW; Deb Procter JNCC; Chris Cheffings JNCC; Ian Taylor EN; Nicola Hutchinson Wildlife & Countryside Link; Colin Bean SNH; Pete Brotherton EN; Ed Mountford JNCC; Nigel Bourn Wildlife & Countryside Link; Brigid Primrose SNH; Ian Strachan JNCC.  
Robin Wynde Wildlife & Countryside Link; Tele-conference

**2. Minutes of 23 May 2006**

The minutes of the meeting of 23 May 2006 were accepted and all actions were done apart from Actions 6, 7, 9 and 13 which are carried over:

**ACTION 1.** All groups to liaise directly with the proposers of the Quality Assurance comments to ensure that these were dealt with satisfactorily

**ACTION 2.** Ant to reclassify the species accordingly in the “scoping list selection overview” column of the final merged spreadsheet – (to be done later)

**ACTION 3.** Ian to speak to Nikki about the interface between marine and terrestrial/freshwater habitats

**3. Stage 1 update**

**3.1 Delisting = UK BAP Generation I**

At the last meeting we agreed that all the current UK BAP species not qualifying under the new criteria should be placed in a separate list for consideration in Stage 2. This is to manage the transfer from the Generation I list to the Generation II list of UK BAP species. This list is to include the reasons why these species have not qualified this time round, to indicate which species have full actions plans and which have species statements, and in Stage 2 to contain signposts as to what further actions, if any, are required.. Since this is not delisting, this list will be called the UK BAP Generation I list.

**ACTION 4.** Ant to send out the UK BAP Generation I list of species not meeting the Species and Habitats Review criteria but to be carried over to Stage 2 of the Species and Habitats Review.

**ACTION 5.** All to check this list is correct and send comments to Ant by 21 August 2006.

**3.2 Quality Assurance**

The Quality Assurance process developed at the beginning of 2006 had two parts: an internal audit done by each species or habitat group and then a check to improve the supportive data by the wider PSHRWG.

The first part of the Quality Assurance has been done by all groups and the second is outstanding for terrestrial and freshwater invertebrates and for all marine species and habitats.

**3.3 Stage 1 process**

There will be no formal sign off between Stage 1 and Stage 2 because the draft list of UK BAP species and habitats is based on scientific criteria for which the data and audit trail are available.

Steve summarised his understanding of the sign off process for the whole Species and Habitats Review. As he understood, sign off would be done after completion of the signposting exercise in Stage 2. The Standing Committee, and hence the countries represented at the Standing Committee, will sign off this review. For this reason, the new PSHRWG needs to be sufficiently representative of the country groups and maintain close contact with the countries to ensure that the country groups

are aware of the Stage 2 work and its implications. This should facilitate the signing off process at Standing Committee.

The list will be ready for signing off once the actions in these minutes (Item 10) and the signposting exercise (Stage 2) are completed.

#### 4. Terrestrial and Freshwater Species

Deb reported that the list of terrestrial and freshwater invertebrates had been sent to the experts for a final check. Deb will send out the invertebrate list to the PSHRWG for Quality Assurance on 25 August 2006.

ACTION 6. Deb to send out the list of terrestrial and freshwater invertebrates to the PSHRWG for Quality Assurance on 25 August 2006

ACTION 7. PSHRWG to return any Quality Assurance comments to Deb by 8 September 2006

#### 5. Marine Species and Habitats

Nikki discussed the paper she had sent to PSHRWG. (The marine review is on the UK BAP website at <http://www.ukbap.org.uk/GenPageText.aspx?id=102>.) The internal Quality Assurance had been done and 126 species and 54 habitats have been signed off. However, there are still 16 species and 12 habitats that require further discussion. A meeting of the marine expert group (MPLUG) is needed to resolve these issues. PSHRWG asked Nikki to reorganise the list of proposed marine habitats in a way that would make it more meaningful (currently the list is dominated by scientific species names).

ACTION 8. Nikki to arrange a meeting with the marine expert group (MPLUG) to resolve the outstanding issues. This meeting to try to fit into the PSHRWG timetable (Item 10)

ACTION 9. Nikki to “tidy up” the marine habitats list for public consumption and so that a comparison with broad habitats can be made

ACTION 10. Once the outstanding marine species and habitats are resolved and the habitats tidied up, Nikki to send out the marine list to the PSHRWG for Quality Assurance

ACTION 11. Ant to send to Nikki the list of marine Lead Partners and members of the marine HAP group so that Nikki can forward the proposed marine list to these people

#### 6. Terrestrial and Freshwater Habitats

Ed reminded the PSHRWG that he had taken over from Ian as the habitats contact but Ian would still remain involved in this work albeit in his new position in SNH.

##### 6.1 Habitat classifications

The habitats classification paper was tabled by Ed and dealt with linking the Habitats Directive and UK BAP classifications and addressed the question of why not use one classification. Many of the existing gaps, i.e. UK BAP habitats not covering Habitats Directive habitats and *vice versa*, will be covered by the proposed habitats. However, some gaps will still remain and habitats in the Habitats Directive that are not covered by the UK BAP are shown in Table 1c of Ed’s paper (attached). These gaps include Inland salt meadows (H1340) and Calcareous Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation.

It was noted that both terrestrial and freshwater and marine habitat descriptions (names) should be simplified and understandable as the PSHRWG needed a wider audience to accept its work. This audience includes the Standing Committee who wants to have names to which they can relate.

Ed and Ian were complemented on this paper.

ACTION 12. Ed to review the paper, send it to BRIG then to Standing Committee and put it on the UK BAP website

## 6.2 Habitats update

The Habitats update paper was tabled by Ed who reported that a habitats sub-group had been formed and had met. For all habitats points of clarification were made and clear links were made between the proposals and the criteria. Some issues were still unresolved and it was estimated that these would take about two months to complete.

Potentially there will be 10 new habitats including traditional orchards. The situation with these new habitats was identified and will be referred to the habitat groups. This will also take some time. PSHRWG agreed that the terrestrial and freshwater habitats group may have to work to different deadlines from the rest of the PSHRWG work.

Overall, the criteria are difficult to apply evenly and fairly to habitats. This is a difficult piece of work and the contacts and all the habitat groups have considered all options, and dealt with these in the best way possible. PSHRWG acknowledged this and said that a description of these difficulties and efforts to deal with them is essential. PSHRWG also agreed that the message to be sent out after this review was that the UK needs a substantial proportion of its semi-natural habitats conserved.

ACTION 13. Ed to describe the work of the habitats group in the habitats proposal

ACTION 14. The habitats sub-group to Quality Assure the habitat proposals

ACTION 15. PSHRWG to see the last version of the habitats list

## 7. Stage 2

### 7.1 Progress of the new PSHRWG

BRIG had approved the structure of the new PSHRWG. Membership of this group was discussed and it was agreed that Steve and Ant would be the Chair and Secretariat respectively. The UK role would be discussed by Steve and JNCC but would probably be Paul.

Nikki would represent the marine people and their work on Stage 1; Ed would represent the work of the Stage 1 habitats groups and Margaret would do this for all the Stage 1 species groups.

ACTION 16. LINK secretariat to co-ordinate the nomination of their representatives

ACTION 17. JNCC and Steve to co-ordinate the nomination of the UK and country representatives

### 7.2 Illustrative Example

JNCC had sent out a first draft of a paper that summarised the understanding of how conservation action for the UK BAP list could be achieved. This paper was opened for discussion and the following comments were received.

#### Delivery

- To take full advantage of the process that is being developed it may be best to initially categorise species and habitats according to delivery mechanisms. Obviously, the delivery mechanisms are the means by which a substantial part of the wider countryside and ecosystem targets will be achieved and is the means by which the devolved countries can contribute to these targets.
- RSPB showed that categorisation based on a species' position on a recovery curve worked well for birds. But, because of a lack of data, the lower plant groups and many of the invertebrate groups felt these categories needed to be adapted somewhat to make them useful.
- Conservation actions should be embedded into the success criteria for the delivery mechanisms. In other words, we should try to design a system that enables the evaluation of the success of conservation actions that are linked to the different delivery mechanisms.
- There is a need to recognise the level at which it is appropriate to work. For example, government conservation action is devolved but NGOs often operate at a UK level, particularly recording schemes. There is a need to account for both of these approaches.
- We need to get the delivery mechanisms right. A substantial amount of thinking needs to be given to this exercise.

### Signposting

- Be aware that the signposting should not be rushed. Incorrect signposting may set the process along a line from which we cannot change. For example, placing too many species in a research category would leave too few species to deal with in other management categories. This may drive the process into developing single species action plans which is not what we want to do. Therefore ensure that the signposting is right before going further.
- The initial signposting should be at a high level (e.g. get the grazing right) and this level should be linked to the publication of the UK BAP List of Species and Habitats that is presented to BRIG and the Standing Committee.
- The details behind the signposting to be worked out after the list is published.

### Monitoring

- There is a need to monitor all species and habitats to some extent. The fact that these are on the list means that there are some monitoring data. However, the type and details needed to be discussed further.
- Need to report on the progress of each species and habitat even if the delivery mechanisms are high policy level.
- Need to use existing recording schemes as efficiently as possible.
- Some recording schemes may need to be improved to achieve the list targets.
- Guard against the criticism that the list is a means to get money for improving the recording schemes.

### Action plans

- The current ideas of actions plans may change. Action plans may simply be links to lists of threats, targets and delivery mechanisms *etc.* that are maintained on a supporting database.
- Each habitat on the list should be covered by an action plan. This is not what the illustrative example did. Grouped HAPs, e.g. for woodlands, could fulfil this role, as long as they dealt with each separate habitat to the extent that this was needed.
- Habitat Action Plans can have species targets embedded in them.

### Process

- The new PSHRWG needs to set itself a work programme for doing a thorough job, but there was a trade off between getting the list published soon and the level of detail that could be presented. Perhaps an option is to offer the Standing Committee a choice over the timetable and level of detail for the published list.

ACTION 18. Ant to simplify the Illustrative Example and to include the comments and note the issues for the new PSHRWG. The new PSHRWG to address these explicitly

### 7.3 New PSHRWG

The first meeting of the new PSHRWG is planned for early September 2006 when the group will develop a work plan.

ACTION 19. Ant to email the contact details of the old PSHRWG members to the new PSHRWG

## 8. Any other business

### Targets review

Pete discussed the targets paper submitted to the group. This paper dealt with trying to resolve differences between UK BAP species needing new targets and those that were suggested for removal from the UK BAP list through the Species and Habitats Review. The tables in the targets paper need consideration from the PSHRWG and will be resent to the PSHRWG with the UK BAP Generation I list for comment.

#### **9. Date of next meeting**

This was the last meeting of this Stage 1 group. Steve thanked the PSHRWG and the wider groups for all their work and especially for the attention to detail and scientific rigour. He concluded that there is not a need to have the Stage 1 list complete before the new PSHRWG starts work but there is a need for closure.

#### **10. Summary of deadlines and actions**

- 10.1 Ant to circulate the UK BAP Generation I list with reasons for inclusion onto the UK BAP list of species and habitats together with the targets paper listing queries about Generation I species and the list of marine species not meeting the criteria. Comments on accuracy needed by 21 August 2006.
- 10.2 Ant to send out the list, excluding marine and invertebrate species, to all groups for final accuracy checks. This to be returned to Ant by 8 September 2006
- 10.3 Deb to send out invertebrate list to PSHRWG for Quality Assurance. This to be returned to Deb by 8 September 2006
- 10.4 Once all checks and Quality Assurance is completed Ant will prepare a master list of all proposed species and send this out to PSHRWG for a final check and sign off
- 10.5 Once the outstanding marine species and habitats are resolved and the habitats tidied up, Nikki to send out the marine list to the PSHRWG for Quality Assurance (The marine group to try to fit in with this timetable. If they are unable to do this, the preparation and final checking of the master list will have to be delayed)
- 10.6 The new PSHRWG to meet in early September 2006

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