

**PROGRAMME BOARD ON NON-NATIVE SPECIES**

**TWENTY EIGHTH MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**APHA, YORK**

**Wednesday 30 November 2016, 11:00**

**1. Attendance / Apologies**

*Present:*

Richard Pullen (Defra, Chair)  
Niall Moore (NNSS - Secretary)  
Olaf Booy (NNSS)  
Sarah Webster (Defra)  
Craig Lee (Defra)  
Mark Diamond (EA)  
Adrian Jowitt (NE)  
Kath Webster (APHA)  
Martin Williams (Welsh Government)  
Phil Boon (SNH)

*Phone:*

Theresa Kudelska (NRW)  
Sarah Wood (NRW)  
Katie McPherson (MMO) [cut off part way through meeting]

*Apologies:*

Emma Boyd (Defra)  
Paul Rose (JNCC)  
David Thomas (Welsh Government)  
Nicola Spence (Defra, Plant Health)

**2. Minutes of 27th Meeting on 12 May 2016**

*Paper circulated PB Nov 16-02*

The minutes were signed off by the Board.

### 3. Actions/matters arising

*Paper circulated PB Nov 16-03*

All actions were discharged, except those specified below.

**ACTION 1 (previous Action 1):** **NNSS** to contact the agency representatives on the Board to ascertain their key issues and also how to best influence their senior management and to draft a short report for the governments.

**ACTION 2 (linked to previous Action 2):** **Richard Pullen** to request a date from **JNCC** for their paper on surveillance requirements in GB. Once **JNCC's** paper is available **Niall Moore** will circulate to the Board.

Under Action 8 the Board discussed the RSPB's intentions with regard to the islands strategic framework paper. The Board wondered whether the paper was for information, or whether it was being asked to adopt it as its own. The Board agreed that the paper should be taken for information only (i.e. this remains an RSPB led report that the Board will look at) and the Board was happy for Niall to continue his informal role in this work.

### 4. GB Strategy Implementation Plan

#### Exception reporting

*Paper circulated PB Nov 16-04*

Under Action 7.9 **Craig Lee** is working to improve the code of practice for species control orders, which should be available before the end of spring 2017. This delay would not prevent these provisions being used if necessary. The implications for monk parakeet control work was discussed, but in practice it was thought the delay to publication of the code would have little effect on the timing of this work as the birds are not active over the winter.

Under Action 8.1 **Niall** reported on issues setting up a research working group (including the loss of 2 chairs). The Board agreed that any reports produced by the research working group should be light touch. **Richard** will discuss chairing this group with Mark Stevenson.

**ACTION 3:** **Craig** to produce a paper on blocks to taking action against Monk Parakeets including any risk associated with delaying action until the code of practice is published – by Jan 31.

**ACTION 4:** **Niall** to circulate the draft ToRs and composition of the research working group to the Board - by Jan 13.

## Country working group feedback

England – **Craig** reported that the group has requested a scoping paper on exotic spiders. It is also considering habitat restoration work, being led by WWT. It is likely this work will now develop on a GB-basis and NRW may be able to assist with this. Not directly linked to this group, but **Craig** discussed a regulators group that has been established in England (which includes the National Wildlife Crime Unit and which discusses intelligence priorities).

Wales – **Martin Williams** informed the Board that the group is primarily there for information exchange. Opportunistic funding has been found to support NRW staff to work on INNS for the next year. This will be linked closely to the EU IAS regulation and the GB Strategy.

Scotland – **Phil Boon** outlined what is happening with SNH on INNS, which included guidance to staff on aspects of INNS management (e.g. use of species control orders) as well as a position statement. There was no report from the Scottish Action Group (no representative was present).

**ACTION 5: NNSS** to send the draft England Working Group scoping paper on restoration (plus notes from the EWG) to NRW – by Dec 16.

## 5. Rapid responses

### Working group updates

*Paper circulated PB Nov16-05A*

The Board agreed that a key issue is the maintenance of specialist capacity and expressed concern that there is an assumption that relevant capacity will be there when needed, which may well not be the case. There was a discussion on how we best share capacity across animal health / plant health / invasive species with the proviso that highly specialist skills (e.g. fish poisoning, vertebrate control) needs to be maintained. There was discussion about whether the policy responsibility should sit under biosecurity or biodiversity.

**Phil** suggested that it would be good to have a reciprocal arrangement to share staff / expertise across GB (e.g. EA, APHA and NE staff working in Scotland and Wales, SNH and SEPA staff doing the same in England etc.). The Board agreed that cross border capacity sharing (e.g. TMG eradication by EA in Wales, etc.) was vital to avoid wasting resources.

**Mark Diamond** suggested that we should put INNS work on an incident management footing. This would help give it sufficient priority.

The Board instructed the NNS to further develop this paper to include more detailed options including on the maintenance of specialist capacity across GB. The paper should address: the problem with current arrangements; how to ensure clear accountability for the actions all the way through (policy drivers are biodiversity related but delivery is closer to biosecurity); the most effective and efficient way of delivering responses; and where cost savings could be made. This paper should come to the Board before its next meeting.

**ACTION 6: NNS** to take forward a paper presenting practical options for how to maintain specialist capacity to deliver contingency and other rapid responses. This should take into account the use of cross-border capacity and address questions of what is wrong with current arrangements, efficiencies that can be made and potential cost savings - by Feb 28.

## Contingency plans

*Paper circulated PB Nov16-05B*

This item was largely covered during the working group update above.

The Board agreed that:

- plans should continue to progress in England, Scotland and Wales;
- country working groups would be used to engage stakeholders in the contingency plans (once they have been signed off by the Board).

## Update from agencies

EA – Water primrose (*Ludwigia*): 29 sites in total, all of which are being treated, eight have been eradicated. TMG ongoing.

NRW – nothing to report.

NE – Bullfrog eradication is expected soon. Marbled newts are being discussed again in early December.

APHA – ruddy duck is ongoing but scaling down (hard to find the remaining small numbers of individuals); monk parakeet is ongoing with a priority to investigate the use of a new trapping technique; Asian hornet work has wound down for the year, plans for next year are being developed.

SNH – three male racoons escaped from the Black Isle Wildlife Park (Dec 2015), its zoo license has now been removed and remaining animals sold to a zoo in England. A pet racoon dog went missing in West Lothian and was picked up by RSPCA 20 miles away. Greater white tooth shrew carcass was found in Galloway forest park – but this record was not verified (monitoring of the site will continue).

SEPA – small patch of floating pennywort was removed from a site near Elgin.

## 6. Resource needs

*Paper circulated PB Nov16-06*

The Board welcomed the paper as a useful first step to determining resource needs. There was discussion on the cost of long term management and how to determine this figure. SNH are currently spending £900k per annum on long term management, but expect to reduce this to about half over the next three years. Wales has undertaken an assessment of costs associated with N2K sites (similar to the English IPENS work) that might be useful. **Sarah Wood** to send a copy of this work to **Niall**. **Adrian Jowitt** suggested that the paper provides ball park figures to give an indication of need, it does not need to be a completely accurate account of all figures. The Board agreed that it was not necessary to pin down detailed figures for long term management as the focus should be on the other aspects of the strategy.

The Board agreed that it needs to have figures showing what is already being spent (i.e. current baseline) and what additional funds are needed to implement the GB Strategy and IAS Regulation.

**Mark** told the Board that biosecurity is perhaps missing from the document (the EA is expending increasing resources on this). **Mark** also informed the Board that the figures in the rapid response paper for water primrose and topmouth gudgeon are inaccurate (despite being provided by the EA). EA will review again and provide accurate figures.

The Board requested that the NNSS included a cost for maintaining specialist capacity in the paper and to add an indicative breakdown of costs between England, Scotland and Wales. All to comment on paper 6, with a deadline of **Jan 13<sup>th</sup>**.

**ACTION 7: ALL** to provide further comments on the resource paper to **Niall** - by Jan 13.

**ACTION 8: Phil** to follow up on cost of INNS management to protect N2K sites in Scotland and report back to **Niall** – by Jan 13.

**ACTION 9: Sarah Wood** to provide **Niall** with figures on INNS costs associated with N2K sites in Wales – by Jan 13.

**ACTION 10: Mark** to check paper 5A and other papers of the Rapid Response Working Group to ensure figures are accurate – by Dec 16.

**ACTION 11: Niall** to rework the resource paper adding in additional spend above baseline, accurate EA figures, costs for maintaining specialist capacity, indicative costs for GB countries and any additional comments from the Board – by March 15.

## 7. EU Regulation

**Craig** updated the Board on progress with permitting (two applications have been received so far), identification information for border force (priority ID sheets are almost finalised) and listing. Defra is working up an implementing regulation to introduce penalties and sanctions; however, this has been delayed and is unlikely to come into effect until May 2017.

EU Exit – **Craig** informed the Board that we need to consider what we want to keep on a statutory footing in the UK. Some things won't be transferable into domestic legislation (e.g. regional working, notification system); although, we might be able to include things in a withdrawal agreement. Reporting to the Commission would obviously not be necessary – there remains a question about whether statutory reporting to Westminster would replace this?

**ACTION 12: NNSS** to finalise ID sheets and send to Border Force – by Dec 31.

## 8. Secretariat report

*Paper circulated PB Nov 16-07*

**Craig** thanked **NNSS** for its strong support during recent pressures in Defra, particularly in the aftermath of the Brexit vote and the departure of the policy lead. **Richard** supported this.

**Phil** asked the **NNSS** to review draft risk assessments that might need to be listed by the WFD Alien Species Group.

**ACTION 13: Olaf Booy** to provide **Phil** with a list of impact scores for draft risk assessments species – by Dec 31.

## 9. Pathway Action

### Future PAPs

**Niall** led on this informing the Board that plans to establish a working for the boating PAP are underway, but that the angling PAP is less advanced.

### Water Transfer

**Mark** informed the Board that the EA is developing a position statement on the transfer of raw water in order to reduce the risk of introducing INNS when transferring water to new catchments. **Mark** will circulate the position to the Board once it is finalised.

## 10. AOB

**Niall** updated the Board on the IUCN's Honolulu challenge.

**Olaf** updated the Board on the work of the Marine Pathways group.

**Phil** updated the Board on work that SNH is funding on developing information about the management of INNS in freshwater (linked to Conservation Evidence).

**Richard / Phil** to encourage Scottish Government colleagues to attend Board meetings.

**Adrian** noted they have plans to discuss legislation relating to fish re-release following capture.

<b>ACTION 14: Richard</b> to contact colleagues in Scottish Government to check on representation / attendance at Programme Board meetings – by Jan 13.
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## 11. Date and location of future meetings

NNSS to scope for dates in May 2017.