



Proceedings of the Fifteenth Stakeholder Forum on Non-native Species

The Grand Hotel, York

12 June 2018



Introduction

The GB Non-native Species Stakeholder Forum was established in 2004 to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to help shape policy and also to hear about key developments in policy and delivery. It is also used as an opportunity to facilitate networking with colleagues working on non-native species issues across GB. The Forum has been held annually since 2004 and is seen as a key element of the GB approach to non-native species. Since 2008 it has been used to facilitate the active involvement of stakeholders in taking forward the GB Strategy.

The morning sessions consisted of talks to update on developments in the past year. The afternoon workshop sessions provided the opportunity for stakeholders to have a wide-ranging discussions.

Overall, 60 attendees from a broad spectrum of organisations attended the Forum. A list of attendees can be found at the end of these Proceedings.

NOTE: The views summarised in the workshop reports represent the views as they were expressed by our Stakeholders.

PROGRAMME

09:30 Registration and coffee

10:00 Welcome address (Richard Pullen, Defra)

10:15 Update on progress since 2017 Forum (Niall Moore, GBNNSS)

Updates and presentations

10:40 Monk Parakeet eradication and research (Dave Parrott, APHA)

11:00 Scotland Invasive Species Initiative and SRDP (Callum Sinclair, Scottish Natural Heritage and Colin Edwards, Forestry Commission Scotland)

11:20 *Refreshment break*

11:40 Stakeholder and public attitudes survey (Steve Griggs, Creative Research)

12:00 Overseas Territories and Biosecurity Project (Gillian Key, GBNNSS)

12:20 Introduction to workshop sessions

12:30 *Lunch*

13:30 **Workshop session:**

- **Workshop 1:** Promoting volunteering at a strategic scale
- **Workshop 2:** Using land management support for INNS control
- **Workshop 3:** Research priorities

15:00 *Refreshment break*

15:20 Open session

15:50 Closing remarks/next steps

16:00 Close

Workshop Reports

Workshop 1: Promoting volunteering at a strategic scale

Chair: Mike Sutton-Croft (APHA) and Zoe Davies (Wildlife and Countryside Link)

The updated GB Strategy, launched in 2015, set a series of ambitious aims and objectives in relation to control of long-term species. Key action 5.6 calls for us to: 'improve ways to support local action' and 5.2 to 'develop and facilitate key GB level long-term management programmes that are cost-effective, evidence-based and proportionate to the threat level'. To succeed in these aims, it requires significant input from both government and non-government actors. Government resources are limited, are unlikely to increase substantially and are likely to be increasingly directed at prevention and rapid response. However, issues related to species that require long term control continue to grow.

To control INNS most effectively requires strategic, coordinated and sustained action. For long-term INNS control the key is working in partnership, where multiple stakeholders pool expertise, local knowledge, resources and funding over a continuous period of time to deliver against jointly agreed objectives. Local Action Groups have been key so far in assisting with control of a whole range of long term control species and use large amounts of volunteer labour which also helps raise awareness of INNS issues amongst the public. However, there remains considerable scope to expand this approach and increase the volunteer effort substantially.

This workshop aims to explore ways in which we can promote greater volunteering and ensure it is properly directed, strategic and persists for the long-term.

Key prompts/questions:

- What has worked well/not worked well to date with volunteering on INNS?
- How much scope is there to increase the numbers of volunteers involved? Are there any barriers preventing further recruitment or retention?
- Are there any significant initiatives that we should be tapping into?
 - Green gyms? Change4Life etc.
 - Community service and prisons

- Other?
- How can we best involve volunteers in activities other than INNS control? Do we want to do this?
 - Communications?
 - Early warning?
 - Rapid response?
- How do we ensure that any increased volunteering effort is strategic and targeted to fulfil local and national needs?
- How do we ensure funding is sustained in the long-term?
- Do we need regional coordinators to fulfil these roles?

Workshop 2: Using land management support for INNS control

Chair: Paul Walton (RSPB, Scotland) and Niall Moore (GB NNS)

70% of the UK land area (17.4 million hectares) is agricultural land and the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) has provided the majority of farm incomes (currently 50-60% in the UK) for many decades. CAP is agreed at an EU level in 7 year tranches – the current one from 2014 to 2020. The UK allocation for CAP for this tranche totals £24.6 Billion (£3.5 Billion per annum). CAP support is composed of 2 types of payment – (i) Direct payments (called Pillar 1) which make up over 90% of the total and (ii) Payments for rural development and the environment (Pillar 2) which total £2.3 billion over the 7 years (around £328 Million per annum). The proportion devoted to Pillar 2 varies across GB – 15% (the maximum allowed under CAP rules) in Wales, 12% in England and 9.5% in Scotland.

The vast majority of CAP payments are still based on the land area but, as we leave the EU, we will have the opportunity to drastically change our approach. The UK Government has stated that it wants to move away from direct payments by land area and towards 'providing public money for public goods' with most of the emphasis on the environment – including building natural capital thinking into our approach to land use management. This change in approach will be phased in over several years but probably not fully in place until 2024.

This workshop aims to explore ways in which we could use the new Environment Land Management Schemes (that will be piloted over the coming years) to contribute to achieving the aims of the GB INNS Strategy.

Key prompts/questions:

- What has worked well with SRDP or other agri-environment payments and what has not worked well to date? [Rhododendron payments in England for instance]?
- How could we design the payments for optimal landscape-scale control?
 - What species should we be looking to control as a priority?
 - Rhododendron? Himalayan balsam? Japanese knotweed? Giant hogweed? Other plants?
 - What about control of animals? Mink for instance?
- As well as management of INNS on the ground could we also get land management support to assist with:
 - Prevention
 - Surveillance and rapid response
 - Restoration?
- Could we get the money to assist with capital spending – putting in place structures to assist with biosecurity?
- Are there relevant connections to the replacement of WFD?
- Could we have for instance ‘mink-sensitive areas’ like there were ‘nitrate-sensitive areas’ in the past.

Workshop 3: Research priorities

Chairs: Hannah Freeman (WWT) and Wayne Dawson (Durham University)

Key points around research priorities

Detection

eDNA/ molecular and other surveillance methods (eg remote sensing, drones)

Develop best practise- avoid duplication

Cost/ Benefit analysis

Trade off of costs and values

Prevention

Measuring success of prevention – where would we be without action. Modelling.

Need predictions to inform decisions- research required to find best ways to facilitate this.

Investigate tipping points/Lag times (for taxa/ environments)- can we predict when will be too late for one type of management to be effective, and when the next type of managers along the invasion process should be taken up?

Social science focussed research on awareness and behaviour change; need to target to specific demographics

Modelling effectiveness of management options

Making projections/ predictions for scenarios – knock on (or unintended) consequences

Innovation, new methods

Understanding the baseline – what would happen if we did nothing?

Marine – what's there, where's the impact?

Are there innovative management options?

Functional analysis (rather than spp?)

Data – do we need to collect data and store the information in one place, or at least the metadata?

Collate info on impacts/effectiveness of management- database required

Citizen science – can it be used more?

Better dissemination of MSc/PhD work (register of titles and topics?)

Hold workshops with academics? (E.g like a [sandpit event](#))

Build networks e.g. BES SIG (or better link SIG with countryside Link for INNS)/ register of experts.

Check out the Defra POST – meeting with academic 'experts'

Feedback from attendees

60 delegates attended the Forum and 16 feedback forms were returned. All 16 agreed that holding an annual Forum was very worthwhile activity.

Comments about the Forum which worked well:

- 'Pre-lunch talks and post lunch workshops worked well'.
- 'Workshops were very useful'.
- 'Presentations very interesting and informative'.
- 'Good networking opportunity – keep breaks long for this'.
- 'Social science – survey outcomes'.
- 'Enjoyed new research / novel topics eg Monk parakeets'.
- 'I thought the presentations were all top quality and the discussion topics well chosen'.
- 'Discussing future research and funding opportunities'.
- 'Good overview and selected speakers'.
- 'The morning session was a useful update with very good presentations / presenters'.
- 'I felt the welcome address could have benefitted from having more GB content'.

Comments about the Forum which didn't work well:

- 'Sit down nature of lunch helped people to mingle but prevented further discussions'.
- 'Not long enough'.

Most suggested locations for the 2018 Forum were:

York	5
Scotland	3
Birmingham	2

Secretariat Website

Comments on the GB NNS website included:

14 out of 16 delegates who returned their feedback forms had visited the Secretariat website. The table below shows the frequency of delegate visits to the website reported on the feedback forms.

	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Never								
Rarely	2	4	2	4		2		3
Once per month	7	14	10	10	5	6	2	11
Once per week	2	6	5	6		4	8	8
Several times per week	3	5	3	7	2	2	8	2

The most useful parts of the website included:

- Species Information
- Species Alerts
- Biosecurity and Prevention
- Legislation and Regulation

The least used parts of the website included:

- Local Action Group pages
- Projects pages
- Training
- GB Co-ordination

Suggested improvements to the website included:

‘People seem not to use it as a hub of NNS information – need to promote it’.

‘Updates to the project pages’.

‘Better understanding of the content as I feel there is a lot of information missed’.

Better linkages to the work we are funding with the National Wildlife Management Centre’.

‘Simpler navigation’.

‘Update it more often’.

‘Make it easier to find things’.

Suggested information to be added to the website included:

‘Best practice’.

‘Link to the database we have funded with the conservation team at Cambridge’.

‘Understanding of projects, where is the action happening’.

‘Easier way to record new sp. records - currently lots of apps’.

‘Page for people to upload project reports’.

More links to partners, locally and nationally to allow us to work closer together’.

NNSS e-learning modules completed are:

Module 1:	Introduction to invasive non-native species	7
Module 2a:	Introduction to identification and recording	5
Module 2b:	Identification of freshwater plants	6
Module 2c:	Identification of freshwater invertebrates	5
Module 2d:	Identification of riparian plants	5
Module 3:	Biosecurity	6

Suggested improvements to the online training included:

‘Marine section’.

‘Surveying for INNS’.

Acknowledgements

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