

**PROGRAMME BOARD ON NON-NATIVE SPECIES
TWENTIETH MEETING**

MINUTES

DEFRA, CONFERENCE ROOM 10, TEMPLE QUAY, BRISTOL

Thursday 26 September 2012, 11.00

1. Attendance/apologies

Present:

Jeremy Eppel (Chair, Defra)
Niall Moore (NNSS, Secretary)
Sallie Bailey (FC)
Colin Charman (CCW)
Mark Diamond (EA)
Hugh Dignon (Scottish Government – via telecon)
Adrian Jowitt (NE)
Ant Maddock (JNCC)
Naomi Mathiessen (Defra, Marine – Item 14 only)
Catherine Murdoch (Scottish Government – via telecon)
Ron Macdonald (SNH – via telecon)
Pete Robertson (Fera)
Trevor Salmon (Defra)
Dave Thomas (Welsh Government)
Huw Thomas (Defra – until Item 8)
Ben Wray (CCW)

Apologies received from:

Olaf Booy (NNSS)
Julian Hosking (NE)
Mike McCabe (CCW)

JE welcomed all to the meeting, explaining his new role which includes his chairing of the NNS Programme Board and the changes at Defra with TS replacing HT as the head of non-native species policy.

2. Minutes of 19th Meeting on 23 February 2012

Paper circulated PB Sep 12-02

The Minutes of the 19th Meeting were signed off with one change suggested by RM – the addition of an extra sentence under Item 8.

3. Actions/matters arising

N.Moore
26/09/2012
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Paper circulated PB Sep 12-03

Action 2 – HT reported that this had been delayed due to pressure of other work – carry over.

Actions 8, 12, 13 and 14 – delayed for various reasons – carry over.

All other actions had been discharged or were dealt with further down in the agenda. There were no matters arising.

ACTION 1 (previous Action 2) – TS/NNSS to re-convene the RRWG to examine lessons learned, review the earlier framework and consider the future approach.

ACTION 2 (previous Action 8) – NNSS/Delyth to circulate the Cefas paper on Chinese Mitten Crab when available.

ACTION 3 (previous Action 12) - GW to circulate the report on part one of the Holyhead *Didemnum* eradication work.

ACTION 4 (previous Action 13) – KB to circulate diagram and explanation of acronyms and groups relating to the MSFD work.

ACTION 5 (previous Action 14) – KB to circulate the Cefas pathways and vectors study when available.

4. GB Strategy

Paper circulated PB Sep 12-04

- Implementation plan (forward/reverse look)

NM introduced Paper 4, beginning with the Reverse Look and highlighted the only Key Action (6.7/8.3 – Finalise ISAPs for priority species) that was on amber. There was discussion on the appropriateness of the amber status of this action and on the purpose, urgency and priority of ISAPs overall. Worries were expressed about process slowing down action. The Board agreed that the plan should provide an indicative timetable for the ISAPS and the RAG status would be changed to include green/amber and amber/green status categories and that a combined update on risk assessments and ISAPs should be produced and circulated by the Secretariat. An assessment of the rapid response approach was also suggested for a future meeting.

MD suggested that amber status would be more appropriate for key actions 6.1 (PR Campaigns) and 6.5 (Pathway Action Plans) due to issues with the difficulties in spending WFD public awareness funding and issues with the Ponto-Caspian pathways paper respectively.

NM then introduced the Forward Look by highlighting those items that needed a Board decision. HT introduced the GB Strategy review item and suggested that there was no need to go back to the drawing board in the review. JE questioned the timing of a review and whether it should be delayed to coincide with the publication of the draft EU Directive with the proviso that some actions could commence in advance of its publication. The Board agreed and discussed timings and scope of any review. AM suggested that JNCC would be keen to include the workings of the Programme Board and the Secretariat (especially staffing levels) within any review of the strategy. PR suggested using the review to gain us leverage within Europe. SB suggested being mindful of the Law Commission review and MD suggested that a review of environmental outcomes was needed. In conclusion, the Board agreed that it was likely that the review would be delayed until the second half of 2013, that it would review governance as well its operation, and that the LAG approach would also be included. It was agreed that NNSS and Defra policy officials would scope out a short paper outlining; the elements that are needed in the review, evidence needs and timescale.

ACTION 6 - NNSS to alter the categories for the rag status reporting to include amber/green and green/amber categories.

ACTION 7 - NNSS to draft and circulate a combined document updating on progress with risk assessments and ISAPs.

ACTION 8 – NNSS and policy officials to draft a short paper outlining the elements that are needed in the GB Strategy review, plus evidence needs and timescale and circulate these to the Board by end October for comments.

5. Secretariat Report

Paper circulated PB Sep 12-05

NM introduced the Secretariat Report. He highlighted changes in staffing and his 3-month secondment to the European Commission to assist with work on the EU Directive. JE summarized the outcome of the British Irish Council (Environment Ministers) meeting at which OB had made a presentation. This had been very well received and the principal outcome of the meeting was that Defra had offered to fund a workshop of relevant experts from across the BIC administrations early next year. This will be organised by the Secretariat and Defra staff and could possibly co-incide with or succeed the next Board meeting. NM then mentioned the secretariat future priorities and the Board sought reassurances that the Secretariat was capable of delivering all the actions listed over the next few months, and that a review of these be undertaken. It was recognized that the list presented was comprehensive, and the Board suggested that in future less detail may be required with an indication of priority actions to focus on.

ACTION 9 – TS and OB/NM to discuss future priorities for the Secretariat and to prioritize the list of future Secretariat actions.

6. Ring-necked Parakeet Policy position

Paper circulated PB Sep 12-06

HT introduced this item. NM stated that the paper has missed the impact on displacement of native birds at bird tables. AJ expressed worry about this species and said that there was a compelling case for the removal of satellite populations. SB, noting similarities with wild boar, suggested that we should be eliminating emerging populations and attempting to contain current populations, noting the difficulties that this entails and suggested using this as a case study for the Law Commission. PR also urged caution due to methodological issues and suggested that we need to investigate the satellite populations further. DT suggested the need for more strenuous preventative action linked to any control and AM urged more effort on education the public on the need for NN vertebrate control. JE suggested that the forthcoming public attitudes survey should take this into account. It was suggested that the USA's access and firearms experiences in tackling monk parakeets should be investigated as it could also prove valuable

After considerable discussion the Board agreed with the adoption of the policy position summarized in points 1-5 (page 8 of the paper) concluding that the eradication of RNPs is not feasible but that we should seek to remove satellite populations before they become established. The Board also agreed to the addition of an extra sentence at point 3: 'Further evidence on the nature, size and growth pattern of satellite populations needs to be explored to underpin future policy'.

Given the likely controversy around control of any bird species, JE suggested we should seek Ministerial endorsement of the policy position, once the strategy to tackle satellite populations had been reviewed.

ACTION 10 – AJ, PR and Defra to discuss the way forward on removal of satellite populations of Ring-necked Parakeet, to include investigating numbers, size and removal methods.

ACTION 11 – Defra/NNSS to refine the draft RNP policy position including adding additional wording at point 3.

7. EU Directive

Paper circulated PB Sep 12-07

HT introduced this item summarizing progress to date with the EU Legislative Instrument including what it is likely to contain. He then outlined the proposed governance structure for the UK negotiations. There was discussion on the role of JNCC covering the 4 country agencies and the 3 agencies present agreed that this was appropriate. The Board agreed to the suggestion to establish a bespoke EU Project Board as proposed in the paper with JNCC representing the country agencies (though they may attend in person if necessary). TS suggested and the Board agreed that whilst there were delays in the production of the Directive in Brussels work to establish the Project Board should get underway to be ready to work as soon as the Directive appeared. The Board agreed to this and the overall approach proposed.

ACTION 12 – TS to proceed with the establishment of the EU IAS Project Board by end October as agreed by the Board.

8. Commercial exploitation

Paper circulated PB Sep 12-08

HT summarized this paper which seeks to establish a generic position but explained that its origins related to the specific issue of licensing a fishery of Chinese mitten crabs in the Thames by the EA. SB commented on her worries about the potential for confusion with commercial exploitation of non-native (but not invasive) forestry trees and welcomed the clear emphasis in the latest draft on **invasive** species. After extensive discussion, the Board welcomed the clear presumption against commercial exploitation in the guidance and agreed that the document should be shortened with this presumption moved to the top of the document and highlighted, together with greater clarity that the policy was concerned with the potential exploitation of existing established INNS, and not the introduction of INNS for commercial exploitation. The remainder of the document should provide the guidance under which any deviation from this presumption should be considered. CM indicated that she had a number of additional specific comments on the paper. There were also suggestions to include a flow diagram and to also include examples (in annexes). The Board agreed with the chair's suggestion that a slimmed down version of the paper should be considered by the Board at its next meeting and that the final agreed guidance would need to be brought to the attention of Ministers. HT suggested that the main guidance section alone would suffice for any publication and that before that stage, the paper should be cleared with all policy areas/regulators whose responsibilities might be affected.

ACTION 13 – All to send comments on the commercial exploitation paper to TS and the revised draft by **31** October to be developed and if necessary brought back to the Board at its next meeting.

9. ISAPs – Topmouth gudgeon

Papers circulated PB Sep 12-09A and B

MD introduced these papers and sought comments. CM reported that colleagues at SEPA were unhappy with some of the actions that have been attributed to them, and she had several comments to feed in. JE suggested that the item be left open and all comments be directed to MD (and copied to OB/NM).

ACTION 14 – All to send comments on the topmouth gudgeon ISAP to MD and copy to NM/OB.

10. Scotland and Wales prioritisations

This item was carried over to the next Board meeting as this will follow the next meetings of the Scotland and Wales NNS working groups where prioritisation will be considered.

11. Training working group report

Paper circulated PB Sep 12-11

NM spoke to this paper and there was discussion mainly on the scope of the training WG report and the priorities. The Board signed off the report and directed the Media and Comms working group to give its advice to the Board on implementation, funding needs and gaps etc.

ACTION 15 – NM to ask the Media and Comms WG to take forward the recommendations of the training WG report and in particular to advise the Board on implementation issues and funding needs and gaps.

13. Biosecurity

Paper circulated PB Sep 12-13

NM introduced this paper proposing the establishment of a working group amongst agencies to look at improving biosecurity advice. There was strong support from the Board for establishing this group with a first step of gathering existing good practice information. JE suggested, and the Board agreed, that output of the working group should be concise and examine the implications for resources. CM said that Scottish Govt would lead for its agencies. JE suggested that this work could be an item for inclusion in the BIC workshop, and this was agreed.

ACTION 16 – NNSS to proceed with the establishment of a Biosecurity working group as agreed by the Board by January 31, 2013.

14. MSFD implementation

NMathiessen gave a verbal update on progress. UK Ministers have agreed on the set of MSFD targets and indicators but these have yet to be signed off by Ministers in the devolved administrations. The next phase will concentrate on developing monitoring and measures to support the achievement of GES as required by the Directive.

ACTION 17 – NMathiessen to send the list of agreed targets and indicators for MSFD to NNSS to circulate to the Board by Sept 30.

15. Stakeholder Forum

NM informed the Board that feedback from the annual forum in May had been very positive. However, several stakeholders suggested that a 2 day event would be more suitable. The Board discussed this suggestion, noting its intent, but decided that a single day with an earlier start and opportunities for bilaterals the day before or after (if necessary) would be more suitable.

16. AOB

Dikerogammarus haemobaphes

MD informed the Board that a new species of *Dikerogammarus* had been discovered near Tewkesbury. The *Dikerogammarus* Task Team would be meeting shortly to discuss this.

ILFA Prosecution

MD also informed the Board of a successful prosecution that had taken place under the Import of Live Fish Act where a fine of £35K was imposed for topmouth gudgeon and wels catfish. It is (probably) only the fourth prosecution under ILFA for this type of offense.

RSPB Life+ bid

NM informed the Board (on behalf of JNCC as AM had departed) that RSPB Scotland are hoping to pull together a LIFE+ bid to eradicate rats from a Scottish island.

17. Date and location of future meetings

PB 20 Approved Minutes

The Board agreed that the next meeting should if possible be held in Cardiff in February 2013. Dates would be circulated.

ACTION 18 – DT to investigate dates and availabilities for the next PB meeting in Cardiff in February 2013.