

Draft

Bio-security Guidance for Biological Surveyors/samplers

A Good Practice Guide to minimising the risk of moving non-native species, parasites and diseases

What is Biosecurity?

Good biosecurity is a way of working that minimises the risk of spread of non-native species, plant and animals pests, parasites and diseases.

What is the purpose of this guidance?

To provide concise practical guidance for staff surveying in the field.

Who is this guidance for?

This guidance is for all individuals who are carrying out biological survey and sampling work in the field and includes:

Government agency staff
Local Authority staff
Ecological consultants
NGOs – Wildlife Trusts, BSBI etc

Levels of biosecurity

There are 3 levels of biosecurity based on the risk posed by the activity being carried out and the area in which it is taking place. These are:

1. Basic Level

- All visits to sites to carry out biological and/or surveying.

2. Medium level

- Direct handling of animals (e.g. some amphibian/reptile/mammal surveys).
- Visits to ponds with invasive plants such as *Crassula*, *Hydrocotyle*, *Azolla*, *Ludwigia* etc.
- Handling of *Rhododendron* plants e.g. in removal operations.

3. High level

- Surveying/sampling in aquatic situations involving many sites in different parts of the country.
- Visiting areas with ongoing/recent disease outbreaks – e.g. known Chytrid infection area, outbreak of crayfish plague, areas with *Phytophthora ramorum/kernoviae* infection.

1. Basic Level

- Arrive at the site with clean footwear and vehicle.
- Ensure footwear is clean (visually free from soil and debris) *before* you leave the site.
- Ensure vehicle is kept clean – in particular remove any accumulated mud *before* you leave the site.
- Make sure you use any facilities provided on the premises to clean footwear/equipment etc.
- Keep access to a minimum. If practical don't take vehicles onto premises and keep to established tracks. Try to park vehicles on hard standing.
- Where possible avoid livestock areas or areas with known plant disease.
- Plan visits so that the most risky visit is the last of the day.

2. Medium Level

- Clean and disinfect footwear *before* you leave the site.
- If vehicle has entered an area close to waterbodies ensure the tyres and wheel arches are adequately cleaned and disinfected (ensure all mud and vegetation are left at the site).
- If you will be coming into direct contact or physically handling animals such as amphibians, voles, fish or invertebrates, the risk of coming into contact with pathogens or infected material increases. You must wear appropriate protective clothing which can be easily disinfected or disposed of to minimise the risk of carrying any disease to other locations.
- In fresh water situations clean and disinfect (or appropriately dispose of) all relevant equipment when moving between sites especially if they are in different catchments.
- Take care to avoid transporting any non-native invasive species between waterbodies.
- Avoid contact with dead or dying amphibians or crayfish.
- Any equipment or other items used should be cleaned and disinfected after the visit. Such equipment includes nets bottles, boats etc.

- Wear appropriate protective clothing which can be either disposed of after the visit or adequately cleaned and disinfected

High Level

As well as following the guidance in the Medium Level category the following is recommended:

- Where possible avoid all contact with potentially infectious material e.g.
 - Avoid touching *Rhododendron*, especially if it looks wilted/dying.
 - Avoid entering water in an area of known chytrid infection
 - Avoid entering water in an area of known crayfish plague.
- If you do come into contact with potentially infectious material (e.g. dead amphibian, crayfish, dying *Rhododendron*) you must:
 - Use appropriate protective clothing:
 - Disposable gloves, washable boots etc.
 - Thoroughly disinfect all equipment such as bottle traps, nets etc.
 - Dispose of gloves appropriately.
 - Dispose of or thoroughly disinfect all external clothing and footwear.