Proceedings of the Twenty First Stakeholder Forum on Non-native Species

Held at The Scotsman Hotel, Edinburgh

11 June 2025

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 (apart from 2020) 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 wide-ranging discussions.

Overall, 83 attendees from a broad spectrum of organisations attended the Forum.

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

PROGRAMME

Registration

Introduction to the day by the Chair (Lisa McCann, Scottish Government)

Update on progress since the 2024 Forum (Niall Moore, NNSS)

Scottish Invasive Species Initiative (Calum Sinclair, SISI)

GB Horizon Scanning (Helen Roy, UKCEH)

Rapid response working group update (Jo Long, SEPA)

Feedback from BES research workshop (Steph Bradbeer, Yorkshire Water)

Assessing new technology needs for practitioners (Pete Robertson, Consultant)

Orkney Native Wildlife Project (Hannah Read, RSPB Scotland)

Introduction to workshop sessions

Lunch

Workshop sessions

Workshop 1: Pathway Action Plans

Workshop 2: Developing an updated Media and Comms plan (2025-2030)

Workshop 3: Assessing stakeholder needs for new techniques for management

15:30 Open session

15:50 Closing remarks/next steps

16:00 Close

Workshop 1 – Boating Pathway Action Plan

Chairs: Olivia Euesden (Defra) and Alison Seton (Scottish Government)

Background

The aim of this is to draft a Pathway Action Plan for recreational boating in GB (which includes canoes, kayaks etc.) based on international good practice.

Key Points from Workshop

PAP Stakeholders

- Clarify ownership of / involvement with actions in the PAP with respect to the mentions of “other stakeholders”.
- Do we have the right folk on the PAP steering groups and do other people need to be involved?
- Ensure all of the appropriate umbrella groups / organisations are included in PAP meetings.
- There needs to be a group that includes marine stakeholders in order to raise awareness of marine INNS – e.g. some kind of marine stakeholder forum?

Encouraging behaviour change

- Engage behavioural scientists in relation to the PAPs since they are about driving changes in behaviours – especially in relation to increasing engagement around CCD.
- Use social media to increase engagement and effect behaviour change.
- There is a need to create a community of organisations / clubs / landowners who sign up to the PAPs and develop some kind of accreditation / awards system for doing this since participation is voluntary, e.g. the blue flag marinas accreditation and RYA Green Blue programme. Evidence would need to be submitted in order to obtain accreditation / awards.
- Need to point out the benefits to landowners of implementing biosecurity measures, e.g. avoiding the spread of INNS on their land or in their waters and that washdowns will prevent new INNS being introduced.
- Raise awareness through the boating press and angling press e.g. Paddle UK and RYA.
- Raise awareness around risks to drinking water quality from boating activities on reservoirs – highlight that this can impact water bills.

Assessment of progress on PAP actions

- Evaluation of the PAPs and lessons learned are important and should be used to revise the PAPs.

- There is a need to review the PAPs periodically to look at progress on delivery of actions, what actions have not been delivered and why.

- How binding are the PAP actions – do contributors commit to these?

- There are no sanctions for failing to carry out PAP actions. PAP group meetings focus mainly on 'talking shop' – there needs to be more focus on the processes / actions taken than on the docs themselves.

- Publish report on the GB NNSS website – needs quantification, hard facts and figures around progress with PAP actions, set up a dashboard.

- There is a need to understand awareness / engagement in order to be able to measure these and assess progress in improving them.

- There is a need to understand the baseline levels of e.g. CCD. Could survey CCD behaviour in relation to boating as this has been done with angling.

- Also need to assess risks and levels of contamination.

Additional / amended PAP actions

- There is not enough 'oomph' behind some of the actions – there is a need to make the actions more 'positive' and strengthen the actions / wording given that the PAPs do not create a regulatory burden.

- The actions need to reference CCD and biosecurity guidance which need to be kept up to date.

- Require manufacturers to add information leaflets or handbooks on CCD / pathways of spread within their product packaging – *it was pointed out that this might be doable with British manufacturers but there are lots of foreign manufacturers that might be hard to influence.*

- Ask manufacturers to look at the design of their products to reduce 'nooks and crannies' where INNS can attach or hide out – *there are too many manufacturers to make this possible.*

Suggested additions to PAPs

- Add lists of relevant species identified through horizon scanning exercises to the PAPs – *was explained that it would not be appropriate to add species lists to the PAPs as these will change over time but the PAPs could be linked to separate lists.*

Updating of PAPs

- There is a need to review the PAPs periodically because biosecurity guidance / boating trends/fads etc change.

- The annexes in the boating PAP need to be updated as some of the guidance is now out of date, e.g. 45 degrees in 15 minutes.

Other comments

- Define terms used within the PAPs where these are ambiguous.

- There are a variety of definitions of 'priority sites' across organisations, e.g. CBD definition. The language used in the PAPs need to be clarified, e.g. explain what is meant by 'priority sites' – sites where priority INNS are present and biosecurity activities are taking place / need to take place?

- Sites containing priority INNS can be mapped using NBN and overlaid with sites where activities are happening.

- Create a list of priority sites that works both at a national and regional/local level and make this available to regional/local bodies so that each region/locality knows which of their sites to prioritise. Any list of priority sites will change over time.

- There is a need to inform owners of priority sites that their site is a priority site.

- Biosecurity needs to be factored into management / lease agreements between organisations and contractors who are employed on their land or users of their land / water assets. These can be changed upon renewal.

- Need to create standards and templates and set out best practice guidelines.

Workshop 2 – Developing an updated Media and Comms plan (2025-2030)

Chairs: Lucy Cornwell (GB NNSS) and Tessa Croissant (Defra)

Background

The review of the GB Strategy highlighted the importance of communications in addressing non-native species issues and called for the Media and Communications Working Group (M&C WG) to review its existing Media & Communications Plan (M&C plan). The current M&C plan was published in 2017 following a review and update of the original M&C plan, published in 2009.

The objective of the M&C Plan is to raise awareness of NNS issues among the general public and key target audiences and, where appropriate, to bring about behaviour change. It contains twenty recommendations for government and stakeholders, covering three main areas:

- overarching communications.
- communicating with key target audiences.
- training and education.

Key Points from Workshop

1. The group agreed that Invasive Species Week is very useful, a driver for other organisations to raise awareness, and that the daily themes are versatile. Next year NNSS could focus on a different pathway each day.

2. Further awareness raising initiatives are needed throughout the year and NNSS should publish a calendar on its website which includes:

    - when to look out for key species such as water primrose and other alert species.
    - key events that can be used as an opportunity for awareness raising, for example the IBPES Plenary in February 2026.
    - other initiatives in which INNS could be integrated.

3. The group agreed that resources provided by the NNSS are great but need to reach a wider audience, for example:

    - local authorities, AONB (national landscapes).
    - garden centres (potentially through workshops with staff).
    - vets and farmers (through veterinary journals, NFU magazine).
    - schools.

4. Suggestions for ways to engage new audiences included:

- hosting workshops.
- through ambassadors / influencers on social media – NNSS to set up a meeting for stakeholders to share ideas and good practice on how to do this.
- through podcasts – CEH could potentially host a monthly INNS podcast, but mainstream podcasts would reach a wider audience.
- releasing positive news stories to the media.

5. The group suggested including actions on the following in the updated M&C plan:

- Carrying out stakeholder analysis to identify motivations for different groups, then tailoring messaging around these.
- Proactively challenging misinformation in popular media (Springwatch, Gardeners' World).
- Establishing an Education Working Group to improve INNS coverage in education (for example developing materials that link to the curriculum for STEM ambassadors and teachers, promoting coverage in TV programmes aimed at children).
- Commissioning further research on public and key stakeholder attitudes and awareness, including where they get their information – to inform future comms.

6. The updated M&C plan should also include:

- a set of principles for good INNS comms, including:
    i. not demonising INNS
    ii. highlighting the importance of native wildlife to justify INNS management
    iii. promoting positive actions people can take that will make a difference (e.g. choosing alternative plants)
- key lines to challenge common arguments.

Workshop 3 – Assessing stakeholder needs for new techniques for management

Chairs: Pete Robertson (Consultant) and Aileen Mill (Newcastle University)

Background

This workshop was attended by over 30 people from a wide range of backgrounds, including practitioners, researchers and policy officials. These were asked the question, in relation to the management of INNS –

> *What would you like to be able to do that you cannot do at the moment, or do in a more cost-effective manner?*

Key Points from Workshop

The group produced 128 responses. These covered a wide range of issues, from prevention, surveillance and management to social, legal and data related issues.

An initial assessment of these highlights a number of common themes where new tools may open new opportunities for management. These include:

- How can we cost-effectively manage species where we currently have no effective tools? This highlighted a range of groups, in particular crayfish, marine species and freshwater plants.

- How can we cost-effectively, selectively, acceptably and humanely trap mammals in areas with very low human populations and no mobile phone coverage? This challenge was particularly raised in relation to mink on the west coast of Scotland (the details of recent NZ method development circulated at the meeting may provide some useful approaches to this question)

- How can we undertake long-term passive surveillance for scarce species over large areas in marine, freshwater and terrestrial environments.

- How can we undertake local surveillance to provide confidence in the absence of key species as part of a rapid response or eradication programme?

- Can we develop methods to manage plants seeds and underground elements such as plant rhizomes?

- How can we safely and effectively survey/treat inaccessible areas such as cliffs and riverbanks?

- Can we develop automated AI driven systems to identify species from pictures, videos and recordings?

- Can we develop new herbicides to replace glyphosate?

- Can we make the development of new biological control agents quicker and more cost-effective?

- Can we develop common frameworks, quality assurance standards and metrics for existing tools such as eDNA, AI image recognition and search dogs to give confidence in their effectiveness?

- Can we manage the movement of INNS in freshwater systems through the use of barriers or by reducing the risks of movement through the raw water transfer system?

A range of issues related more to legal, social or regulatory issues rather than the need for new tools. These included:

- Can we improve the speed and cost-effectiveness of processes for the off-label approval of novel pesticides, traps, biological agents and management activities on protected sites?

- What would be needed to approve the safe, humane and effective use of toxins for the control of vertebrates?

- Are there best-practice methods or new approaches to gain land access and communicate more effectively with landowners?

- Could there be more effective/responsive centralised points of contact to assist with issues such as regulations, site access, data on species distributions?

The meeting then went on to discuss what is holding back the development of new methods and the process of using stakeholder needs to guide new tool development.

It was agreed that the meeting provided a fruitful approach to INNS management tool development that was not provided by other existing fora and that further meetings would be useful. These should include more targeted discussions on particular taxa and environments and moving on to consider which technologies might usefully be applied to these questions (see table below).

Taxa	Species	Phase	Issue
Vertebrates	All	Management	Better licensed control of exotic pets, all cats pit tagged - like dogs.
Vertebrates	Stoats	Management	Land access for monitoring- needed to confirm areas stoat free.
Vertebrates	All	Surveillance	Active national surveillance for INNS mammals.
Vertebrates	All	Surveillance	Mammal species monitoring, remote monitoring with limited manpower and financial resources. Is there a way to use technology to identify camera trap locations - e.g. identify potential suitable habitat for forage to reduce field time.
Vertebrates	All	Surveillance	AI toll to identify pictures and video files at volume.
Vertebrates	All	Surveillance	DNA field test kit - sensitivity tested for each species.
All	All	Surveillance	Relate eDNA detection to abundance.
Vertebrates	Mammals	Surveillance	Detecting escaped individuals or at very low density.
All	All	Surveillance	Is there scope for more use of eDNA in monitoring - particularly in automated and or early warning form.
Vertebrates	Hedgehogs	Legal	If live trapping hedgehogs, can they be killed as it is illegal to release (in Orkney).
Vertebrates	Rodents	Management	Taxon specific toxins (that are palatable) e.g. Norbromide (NZ)).
Vertebrates	Mink	Management	How do we deploy and service traps in remote areas with few people.
Vertebrates	All	Surveillance	Improved battery life for monitoring and surveillance.
Vertebrates	Mink	Management	Remote siting of capture traps by drone - setting/siting not possible at present.
Plants	All	Management	Management inaccessible areas - drone spraying options.
Vertebrates	Mammals	Management	We now have a requirement to be trained as a trapper (Scotland), competence level training, increase skills base, reward training with certification and better wages.
Vertebrates	Mammals	Management	Radio frequency enacted drones to check status of traps and download results for immediate reaction.
Vertebrates	Mammals	Management	GPS enabled RTA system for non-spot telecoms.
Vertebrates	Pink Salmon	Management	Monitoring, surveillance and management options.
Vertebrates	All	Management	Traps that only operate for specific targets (but are effective).
Vertebrates	Salmon Fluke	Management	Surveillance and monitoring for species.

Vertebrates	All	Management	Licensing process simplified to allow NZ developments to be tested in UK context.
Vertebrates	Mammals	Management	Interested in the NZ development of self-resetting traps.
Vertebrates	Mink	Management	Remote notification of trap status without phone signal - affordable satellite notification system.
Vertebrates	Herps	Management	Species-specific contraception and delivery.
Vertebrates	Fish	Management	Very hard to eradicate (ponds and lakes relatively easy if you can drain or use piscicide although high collateral damage.
Vertebrates	Parakeets	Management	Quiet/unobtrusive and speedy methods of removal.
Vertebrates	Stoats	Management	More widely available traps - trap types are restrictive.
Vertebrates	Stoats	Management	Techniques used widely in NZ such as poisoning.
All	All	Surveillance	Field based applications for eDNA/airDNA.
Plants	Freshwater	Management	Need widespread effective catchment management at correct scale and timeframe - difficult in connected habitats.
Vertebrates	Mink	Management	State of play re eDNA to identify mink presence to reasonable resolution of time and location without lots of ongoing spot sampling.
Plants	All	Surveillance	Is there an affordable way to survey species using drones which identifies different species presence.
All	All	Surveillance	Spread of species between regions - develop watch lists for spread.
Plants	Riparian	Surveillance	Monitoring success of multiple enforcement cases. At present we monitor progress at discrete sites with boots on the ground - very time consuming.
Plants	All	Data	Access to better evidence base of actual impacts of species on species beyond current generalities.
Plants	Sarracenia, Knotweed	Management	Currently spend 10,000s per year on control, because we have the money to. Upstream local authorities for it, negating our efforts. Political stubbornness prevents better working - we should share money.
Plants	Sarracenia	Management	Detection of tiny plants for removal.
Plants	All	Management	Treat seed banks of invasive directly.
Plants	All	Management	Can we develop methods to stop plants setting seed?
Plants	Various leaved water milfoil	Surveillance	How do we detect it at a national level.

Plants	Giant hogweed, Himalayan balsam	Surveillance	Being able to map INNS (riparian) at a catchment level. Accurate data points so that we know where top of catchment is.
Plants	All	Research	Have better direct contact with relevant stakeholders (Govt or HSE) when trying to undertake field research.
Plants	All	Management	Can we increase the cost-effectiveness of developing biological control.
Plants	Water Primrose	Surveillance	I need a reliable method of locating nerve sites around infestations, both at local and national level.
Plants	All	Management	Apply herbicides on cliff sides - difficult to access land.
Plants	All	Research	Encourage landowners and contractors to stake on R&D projects as currently it is awkward and disjointed.
Plants	All	Management	Instantaneously replace IA plants with native species without biotic degradation.
Plants	All	Management	Treat plants below ground and remote sensors to scan rhizome networks.
Plants	Water Primrose	Management	Reducing biomass is relatively easy, but eradicating from a site can taste 15+ years. Refined, new methods needed.
Plants	All	Management	Establish an industry standard as ecologists/invasive experts/arboriculturalists all have different standards and suggest different things for management.
Plants	Curly Waterweed	Management	Difficult to control in areas not accessible in waders or a boat - biocontrol?
Plants	All	Management	Field based irradiation to render seeds unviable.
Plants	Giant Hogweed	Management	Difficult to access areas, steep riverbanks, abseiling, boat, drone but all have problems - e.g. woodland for drones.
Plants	All	Management	Develop alternative pesticides to replace glyphosate.
Plants	All	Management	Plant eradications - Natural England processes, permissions take time.
Plants	Floating pennywart	Impact	To what extent, if any, does it affect flood risk?
Plants	White River Crayfish	Management	How can we kill it? Synthetic Pyrethroids.
Plants	Freshwater	Management	More effective method of controlling submerged freshwater plants that is not too damaging.

Invertebrates	Crayfish/Mitten Crabs	Management	Guidance on humane dispatch and humane method for large-scale despatch as current methods may not be humane.
Plants	Freshwater	Management	INNS prioritisation by region/catchment, currently focussing on giant hogweed but hard to prioritise with so many INNS, which are best to manage.
Plants	Crassula	Management	Effective control method - quick and rapid, not be too damaging to their habitat.
All	Marine	Surveillance	Early monitoring/prevention for marine INNS, how can we do other than port engagement which is a challenge?
Invertebrates	Mosquito	Surveillance	Detect mosquito aquatic breeding habitats for control interventions - UKHPA doing this?
Invertebrates	Chinese Mitten Crab	Management	Effective monitoring and management to stop their spread and control/eradicate populations.
Invertebrates	Crayfish	Management	Effective way of locating and eradicating NN crayfish in river systems.
Invertebrates	D. Vex	Management	Rapid method of IDing D. Vex and controlling it.
Invertebrates	Marine	Management	Sessile Marine species covering small areas of seabed or substrate - i.e. caught very early in establishment phase - any better ideas than covering with massive sheets of tarpaulin?
Invertebrates	Signal Crayfish	Management	Always queries about management and no answers.
Invertebrates	Asian Hornet	Management	More cost-effective spring trapping to enable wider deployment of smart traps.
Invertebrates	Signal Crayfish	Management	Need widespread effective management, control of spread.
Invertebrates	Zebra Mussels	Management	We currently scrape them off the fish pass. They smother the aeration system. Would love a clear treatment or even clear disposal advice.
Invertebrates	Signal Crayfish	Management	Traps not cost-effective, conflicts with trailing barriers, conflicts with salmon migration and EA.
Invertebrates	Crayfish/Mitten Crabs	Management	Need an effective eradication strategy - at the moment limited to stopping them reaching specific areas.
All	Marine	Management	Eradication methods are almost completely lacking.
Invertebrates	Insect pests	Management	Effective, low-cost raid genetic methods to trace back invasion events.
Invertebrates	Signal crayfish	Management	How can I treat/eradicate/reduce numbers of signal crayfish?

All	All	Surveillance	Priority species to repent establishment of. – detection. (easy cheap and accurate)
All	All	Management	Managing potential invasive populations on their native range
All	All	Management	Multi-species methods.
Plant	Floating pennywart	Management	General guidance is not helpful in all areas of UK - different habitats, management.
Plant	Floating pennywart	Management	Guidance focuses to the South - not always applicable to the north - INNS week too early for practical engagement in the north.
All	All	Funding	No cost/funding competition for any INNS management for NGOs.
All	All	Data	Joined up academic/practitioner/governance groups. For example, the NERC funded REDALERT consortium, looking at early warning systems in water quality.
All	All	Data	Repository for holding AI species ID models and appropriate quality assurance.
All	All	Data	AI Toda analysis of trapping effort and captures to include future strategies.
All	All	Data	Different projects share data to found linkages more easily.
All	All	Data	Slow data flows prevent rapid response from being rapid.
Vertebrates	Fish	Data	Not all sites have species lists under KIF. Unsure what species present to understand spread and distribution. Increase remit to require fish species lists for all sites and update regularly.
All	All	Data	Species prioritisation on a regional level.
Vertebrates	Mammals	Surveillance	National dog detection validation categorised for species and expertise level.
All	Marine	Surveillance	Effective monitoring of marine INNS every year.
All	Freshwater	Surveillance	Potential import of water from Norway to help with water resilience - surveillance, screening and treatment to stop introduction of IAS.
All	Freshwater	Management	Effective methods to reduce INNS transport through raw water transfer tunnels.
All	Vertebrates	Surveillance	Cost effective methods to survey an area surrounding a recent Rapid response to confirm the absence of a target species - acoustic surveillance?

All	All	Legal	Understanding which of the many governmental/non-governmental bodies is leading on an issue can be infuriating.
Plants	All	Legal	Multi-year, multi location permits for glyphosate (or alternate herbicide) delays time taken to get permits - delays management.
All	All	Legal	Consistent sustained volunteer participation in IAS control.
Plants	All	Legal	Can we streamline of-label approvals to use existing pesticides on INNS.
All	All	Legal	Challenge to keep comms across whole catchment - multiple stakeholders per site - landowner, agent, farmer, anglers.
All	Schedule 9 species	Legal	landowners wanting to keep species in private gardens - no powers to go in.
All	All	Legal	Agility of legal system regs to adapt - adaptive management for regulation?
All	All	Legal	Access land legally.
All	All	Legal	Land-access without resistance/red tape.
All	All	Data	Universal mapping/data - so many systems I record/ inns mapper/ inaturalist/seek. Local authorities/organisations.
Invertebrate	Asian Hornet	Management	More rapid removal of nests once they have been discovered.
Vertebrates	Mammals	Management	Can we have traps that can be deployed for extended periods without servicing, that automatically bait and reset, and which only catch the selected species?
Vertebrates	Mammals	Management	Can we develop acceptable methods to use toxins on vertebrates.
All	All	Surveillance	Agreed validation framework for eDNA uses in analytical tests - Quality management system.
All	Freshwater	Surveillance	How can I conduct aquatic surveillance in a more cost-effective way.
All	Freshwater	Surveillance	More systematic monitoring off INNS through eDNA in river catchments and sentinel sites network across GB.
All	All	Data	How can I easily translate the future risk of INNS (generally and specie is specific) into financial/natural capital terms to help decision makers understand the need to act proactively.
All	All	Legal	National Biodiversity Trust, Priority committee. All INNS.
All	All	Legal	How can I better train operational staff on the need to be biosecure.

All	Marine	Surveillance	Detecting hitchhikers on ships boats other vectors.
All	All	Legal	Restrictions on recruitment mean we can't ask locals to apply or screen in this way, we also can’t bypass recruitment/interview processes. Costly if we already have people on board suitable.
Plants	Marine	Management	Invasive seaweeds covering large areas of natural habitat - any feasible control methods at all?
Plants	Crassula	Management	Any way to manage it - biocontrol development?
All	All	Management	Any replicable, consistent strategies for community buy in/leadership?
Plants	All	Management	Mass-production of biocontrol agents to give the best chance of establishment.
All	All	Management	Form management discussion/exchange groups to disseminate best practice, swap approaches.
Mammals	Stoats	Management	More widely available trapping methods - trap types will restrict us going forward.
All	All	Data	A common platform to host AI species ID models, including QA.
Plants	All	Management	Are there methods/chemicals to stop plants from setting seed?
Plants	All	Management	How can we cost-effectively remove plants from protected areas where herbicide use may be limited.
Plants	All	Management	Can we make biological control of plants quicker and more cost-effective.
Plants	All	Management	We need new pesticides to replace glyphosate.

Attendance

Angling Trust
APHA Safety Health & Wellbeing Advisor (Scotland)
BES member
British-Irish Council Secretariat
BUGLIFE- The Invertebrate Conservation Trust
CABI
Cardiff Harbour Authority
Cefas
Consultants
Defra
Dept of Agriculture, Environment & Rural Affairs
Environment Agency
Fera Science Ltd
Fisheries Management Scotland
Forestry Commission
GB NNSS
Greenspace Information for Greater London
ICL, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew
National Biodiversity Data Centre
Natural England
Natural Resources Wales
NatureScot
Newcastle University
NFUS Env & Land Use Committee/Portnellan Farm LLP
Non-native Species Inspectorate (APHA)
North Wales Wildlife Trust
Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)
NTS
Property Care Association
Queen's University Belfast
RSPB Scotland
SASA
Scottish Environment Protection Agency
Scottish Invasive Species Initiative (NatureScot)
Scottish Water
Severn Trent Water
South West Water
Tees Rivers Trust
The Office for Environmental Protection
The Scottish Government
The University of Edinburgh
Tyne Rivers Trust

UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology; University of Exeter
United Utilities
University of Aberdeen
University of Central Lancashire
University of Edinburgh
University of Stirling
Waterlife Recovery Trust
Welsh Government
West Cumbria Rivers Trust
Yorkshire Water

Feedback from the attendees

83 delegates attended the Stakeholder Forum and 34 feedback forms were returned. All 34 agreed that holding an annual Forum was a worthwhile activity.

Comments about the Forum of which aspects worked well:

- Interesting and enjoyable workshops and good to hear other people's perspectives. I hope the follow up is good.
- Workshops worked well and produced some really good ideas and insights. Small groups helped spark conversations and discussions. It was good to have information about their content in advance.
- Talk on SISI was great.
- A good balance of talks and workshops, and an interesting programme.
- The discussions between policymakers, researchers and practitioners was great to witness.
- The balance between sessions was right, with good long refreshment breaks allowing networking.
- Good variety of research / LAG / Government input. Could we ask more utility companies?
- My first event and I would be happy to attend something with a similar structure in the future.
- It was well balanced. The afternoon sessions allowed deeper dives into particular themes.
- Could we have the breakout sessions in the morning to encourage more networking?
- Particularly enjoyed 'assessing stakeholder needs for new techniques for management' talk and workshop; very useful and engaging, and not an area we have discussed before.
- GBNNSS update could include a greater range of updates – quite similar to previous years talks.

Comments from the Forum which didn't work well:

- Tricky finding accommodation due to the high cost.
- The PAP workshop could have had more preparation. A handout would have been useful as some participants were very new to the subject and an introduction would have helped.
- The PAP workshop was poor. It was unstructured and badly facilitated. A missed opportunity. Added uncertainty rather than bringing clarity.
- A bit better timekeeping / chairing in sessions please. Presentations were too long and went on beyond their allotted time.
- Pointless poster displays as not mentioned at all. Poster time to view or discuss was a missed opportunity.
- Talks very informative, but content seemed to be slightly overlapping.
- Use of the microphones provided would have been better. It wasn't always easy to hear speakers or those asking questions.

Comments about the catering or venue:

It was agreed the venue was generally very good however the food had mixed reviews. At lunch time people at the front of the queue agree lunch was good, however the food ran out and some people didn't have any.
More tea/coffee stations would have helped to ease the queues.

Where do you think the Forum should be held next year?

No preference was given by most people, however proximity to a train station was considered important. Other suggestions, in most popular order, were:

York
Manchester
North of England
Edinburgh
Wales
It was suggested that we combine the Non-native Species Stakeholder Forum with the International Invasive Weed Conference (PCA).

Secretariat Website

How often do you visit the website?

Never	**2**
Rarely	**12**
Once per month	**10**
Once per week	**3**
Several times per week	**1**

Suggestions for improving the NNSS website.

- Ensure the website comes up in a Google search.
- Better signposting.
- Some links are broken.
- Add in other relative websites that contain invasive species information.
- Easier navigation to the training section would be helpful.
- Unless you know where to find information it can be tricky to navigate. Perhaps a landing page for user groups could be a starting point, eg if you are a researcher, go here …. If you are a practitioner, go here ….
- Make sure the website is widely known about because it is a valuable resource.
- Some of the content is under strange headings.

Information which should be added to the NNSS website.

- Include key headlines on national harm caused by INNS.
- There is almost too much information in some places – streamlining some of the guidance would be helpful, for example deleting out of date guidance.
- Include links to stakeholders.
- Include links to conservation evidence / more evidence to inform decisions about management.
- Include a potential list of practitioners / experts to contact over specific issues.
- Maybe include a plant or INNS quiz for engaging content.

NNSS e-learning modules completed are:

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

Suggested improvements to the online training included:

- More marine INNS training. Maybe one on impact or generic management.
- Really enjoyed the training modules, super informative and I like that you get a certificate.
- The videos didn't work on the floating pennywort module.

Other resources that would be useful for the NNSS to develop:

- A database / list of academic groups / universities which are involved in INNS and what they are currently working on.
- More detailed information to help people carry out risk management assessments locally.
- Platforms for communication.
- Maybe more outreach on social media.
- Good resources are provided, perhaps more on volunteering or community engagement.
- In person workshops for small community groups, e.g. gardeners, river users, young people.
- Training for contractors.


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