

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

MINUTES

**CONFERENCE ROOM 3, SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT,
VICTORIA QUAY, EDINBURGH
Monday 11 October 2010, 11.00**

1. Attendance/apologies

Present:

Francis Marlow (Chair, Defra)
Niall Moore (NNSS, Secretary)
Sallie Bailey (FC)
Susan Davies (SNH)
Mark Diamond (EA)
Ian Hooper (Scottish Govt)
Verity Hunter (NNSS, Minute taker)
Ant Maddock (JNCC, by telecon)
Pete Robertson (Fera)
Angela Robinson (Scottish Govt)
Richard Saunders (NE)
Huw Thomas (Defra)
Frances Williams (CABI, for presentation only)
Gabe Wyn (CCW, by telecon)

Apologies received from:

Olaf Booy (NNSS)
Trevor Perfect (Defra)
Diana Reynolds (WAG)

2. Minutes of 15th Meeting on 14 June 2010

Paper circulated PB Oct10-02

There were no comments and the Minutes of the 15th Meeting were agreed.

3. Actions/matters arising

Paper circulated PB Oct10-03

Action 1 (previous Action 3) – NM reported that work on the Country working group prioritisation exercises is ongoing – carry over.

Action 3 (previous Action 8) – NM said that the final meeting of the GB Dv Working Group would consist of a lessons learned exercise. HT said that there were suggestions that the Holyhead work had not been completely successful and NM believed that there are no plans to do any more control (but see later, under Agenda Item 7). SD said the implication for Scotland was that there should be control and pathway management in future, rather than an eradication effort.

Action 7 – HT said that a feasibility report on Monk Parakeet eradication had been received and stakeholder discussions held. Defra is now in discussion with NE and Fera about delivery issues.

Action 15 – HT reported that the national planning system is currently in a state of flux and it is not possible to sensibly take forward discussions on mechanisms to feed into planning policy statements.

Action 16 – NM said there had been some progress on the prioritisation of rapid response species and a paper would be put forward at the next PB meeting.

All other actions had been discharged and there were no matters arising.

ACTION 1 – (previous Action 1 and previous Action 3) - NNS to report back the results of the Country working group prioritisation exercises to the Programme Board.

ACTION 2 – (previous Action 3 and previous Action 8) – NNS to ensure that the final meeting of the GB Dv Working Group would consist of a lessons learned exercise.

ACTION 3 – NNS to put forward a paper on the prioritisation of rapid response species to the next PB meeting.

4. GB Strategy

Paper circulated PB Oct10-04

- Implementation plan (forward/reverse look)

NM introduced Paper 4, beginning with the Reverse Look and highlighted Key Actions 6.4 and 6.5 on pathway management. He reported that a successful workshop including many industry representatives had been held on the Pacific Oyster and an aquaculture code of practice. PR said the NNRAP also covers pathways and might need to feed in its views. NM said NNSIP will be assessing trends in pathway use. The PB was content with the suggested approach to pathway management as shown by the *Didemnum* working group and Pacific oyster workshop.

On Key Actions 6.7 and 8.3, the development of priority ISAPs, NM said there had been little progress and the Secretariat would try to take forward the most straightforward ones. HT thought that the quality of ISAPs and not quantity of them was most important. IH said it would be useful to have an ISAP for Signal Crayfish and enquired why progress was being delayed. NM replied that there were substantial disagreements between experts on the efficacy of trapping.

On Key Action 6.8, HT said that work on Ban on Sale had been caught up in the Coalition Government's new policy on regulation. The current list of proposed species consists entirely of aquatic plants but progress has been slow.

NM introduced the Forward Look. On Key Action 6.7 the PB agreed to add Killer Shrimp to the list of priority ISAPs.

ACTION 4 – NNS to add Killer Shrimp to the list of priority ISAPs.

5. Secretariat Report

Paper circulated PB Oct10-05

NM introduced the paper and highlighted the following issues.

Rapid responses

Much of the previous month had been taken up with work on Dikerothrips. The Secretariat produced ID sheets and posters and had commissioned a rapid response. The Secretariat had also helped with awareness raising to assist a rapid response to zebra mussels in the Glasgow to Edinburgh canal.

Be Plant Wise

Phase 2 of the Be Plant Wise campaign was being launched in Scotland on 11 October and England and Wales on 12 October, focusing on the theme of disposal. A stand had been manned at the AQUA 2010 trade show and this had shown industry to be very positive. More engagement with aquatic plant growers is planned. HT reported that the letter of thanks from Ministers to trade supporters of the campaign had been very well received. MD asked if there was any quantitative assessment of the campaign so far and NM said that this would be difficult.

Risk analysis

NM said that the Secretariat is trying to finalise the risk management elements of the Risk Analysis Mechanism. HT said the Eagle Owl RA will be submitted to Ministers shortly. SB asked about progress with the Eucalypts RA as the FC has been under pressure on this for some time. NM said that a RA can take over two years to finalise but promised to find out the current state of play and report back to FC.

Economic Impacts report

NM reported that the production of the Economic Impacts report by CABI had been a long and involved process due to the complex peer review process. It is now almost V. Hunter

14/04/2011

Page 3 of 8

ready except for some final tidying up to clarify the basis of some statements. SB would like to review another draft of some parts of the report as she thought some figures could easily be misinterpreted.

Website

The Secretariat website 'hits' figures seem to have reached a plateau but NM explained that the ID sheets are held on the CEH server and therefore show no 'hits'.

Ireland

HT noted the Secretariat input into the All Ireland work and asked about progress. NM said that both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland are going to produce harmonised but separate strategies.

ACTION 5 – NNSS to investigate the current situation with the Eucalypts Risk Assessment and report back to FC.

ACTION 6 – AR to send relevant sections of the economics report to FC for final comment.

6. EU strategy update

Paper circulated PB Oct10-06

HT introduced this paper and stressed the need for a strong steer from the Board to take to Ministers. HT stated that a key question is: what do we want to get from an EU Strategy? He suggested that a better baseline of protection across states, more consistent trade and movement controls, better intelligence sharing and more cross-border action would all be productive.

A consultants' report is due to be published shortly. The Commission will then reform the Working Group and the next meetings should be formative rather than discussion-based.

HT went through the paper systematically and asked for comments on the suggested GB position on each of the four main issues. There followed a wide-ranging discussion including the possibility of micromanagement by the EU; the need for practicality; the need for a more level playing field across member states; trade and biosecurity issues; cost/benefits; how any mechanisms would work; the possibility of EU-wide risk assessments; how any central body would interface with Governments; white/black list approaches. The PB agreed that an important component would be a common framework/standards for risk assessment rather than a single imposed risk assessment methodology.

FM warned that we need to be careful what the UK/GB signed up to as Defra would be expected to bear the cost of any consequential increases in the EU's budget for this area. PR thought that most benefit would come from Option C although capacity building for member states and support/finance for rapid response were not

V. Hunter

14/04/2011

Page 4 of 8

mentioned. HT said this had been discussed and the DG SANCO model allows for some rapid response costs to be reimbursed later. IH agreed that Option C would be best but queried more generally whether the benefits to GB would be so great as to be worth the extra regulation. Overall, the Board agreed that Option C was the best and also agreed with the suggested GB position in the final box in the paper.

HT said he would await the consultants' report and then consult with policy colleagues on their positions.

ACTION 7 – HT to await the consultants' report on the EU Strategy and then consult with policy colleagues on their positions.

7. Rapid Responses

Paper circulated PB Oct10-07

- MoU

HT reported that the MoU had been agreed and four organisations had signed it to date: CCW, Fera, MMO and NE.

- *Dikerogammarus*

MD updated the meeting on the position on *Dikerogammarus* as EA has been the co-ordinating body on the rapid response since the species was found in Grafham Water on 3 September. A rapid risk assessment had been completed. Biosecurity measures have been put in place at the reservoir and preparations are being made to eradicate the few specimens found in the outlet stream. High risk waters nearby have been surveyed and are clear so far. MD thanked everyone for their support, including NE, Anglian Water, the Green Blue, RYA, the STAG group and Comms group and especially OB of the NNSS.

There is now a proposed Action Plan for national response. As the response has unfolded several 'gaps' have been found, especially in relation to biosecurity e.g. no suitable biocide has been found for use by anglers. There is a question of how long users will be willing to bear the costs and much reliance has been placed on goodwill so far.

In terms of lessons learned the lack of a contingency plan is a major one. PR asked what questions the process has raised for the EA. MD said that EA is a regulatory body relying largely on goodwill in this case and they fear that businesses may sue in future for loss of earnings due to closures etc. HT agreed the current voluntary MoU has some weaknesses. RS said that NE would not have been able to handle the outbreak as so much staff time was involved.

FM thanked EA and Anglian Water and all involved on behalf of the Board for all their work on this issue.

- *Didemnum* update

GW updated the meeting on last winter's eradication programme. Holyhead Marina has been re-surveyed and some colonies have returned. £150k has been spent so far, with two years to go. Monitoring is continuing, followed by further eradication over the next two winters. SD reported that a project officer has been appointed in Largs and, following recent surveys, a containment and control programme is in place for this year only. GW said CCW/NSS are preparing pathway management plans and hopes to have costings for the next PB meeting.

- Individual species actions

NM reported on the other individual species actions and said a paper would be produced for the next PB meeting on rapid response priorities (see Action 3 above). HT said that *Dikerogammarus* and Eagle Owl should be added to the updated list of rapid response species. SD asked whether some species should be dropped from the current list.

ACTION 8 – NSS to present paper on pathway management for *Didemnum vexillum* at next Board meeting.

8. Talk – Economic impacts report – CABI

FW presented the lunchtime talk outlining the main findings of the CABI research.

9. NNSIP update

Paper circulated PB Oct10-09

NM updated the board on progress with the species information portal (NNSIP). Much progress on a range of complex technical issues has been made with almost one year still to go. A launch is planned for the NNSIP after it migrates from CEH to the Secretariat's server – probably in spring 2011. An alert system has been developed and used for *Dikerogammarus* with reports going to CEH. Annex 1 of the paper lists all proposed alert species and feedback from the PB is requested.

NM and BRC have been holding meetings with key government agencies to facilitate moving their non-native species data onto the Portal. These are ongoing. The next NNSIP Steering Group meeting will discuss the future of the portal beyond September 2011.

SB expressed reservations about the inclusion of some tree species in the fact-sheets.

ACTION 9 – All to feed back to NNSS on the list of proposed alert species in Annex 1 of PB Oct10-09 by November 30.

10. Marine Workshop

NM reported on the outcomes of the workshop to explore the appetite for an aquaculture code of practice that the Board had previously requested JNCC and NNSS to organise. The workshop had been held in September but had been expanded to look at the contentious issue of Pacific Oysters as a way to get good industry involvement. The workshop succeeded in bringing the industry and government agencies together in a constructive atmosphere. The proposed Aquaculture Code of Practice was well received and will be taken forward by a core group, led by the industry. On Pacific oysters an issues paper has been called for to iron out a way forward.

11. Stakeholder Forum 2011

Paper circulated PB Oct10-11

NM asked for comments on the proposed venue and timing for the next Stakeholder Forum. The Board agreed that mid-May would be most suitable. FM flagged up that there may be difficulty with funding due to the ban on marketing and promotion activities in Defra. The Board approved Edinburgh as the first choice but the proposed venue was not popular with Scottish members as they thought it too commercial. A University venue was suggested as a possible alternative.

NM asked for comments on the proposed programme. The idea of a talk on the evening before the Forum met with general approval, depending on costs. IH and AR thought use of a SG conference room might be possible. SB suggested a session on volunteering, IH suggested a talk on the new Scottish legislation, AR suggested a practical focus. HT suggested a talk on Be Plant Wise from the trade point of view and an update on the *Dikerogammarus* work. Recreational boat use was also suggested, perhaps involving stakeholders such as water companies.

ACTION 10 – VH to investigate further Edinburgh venues for the 2011 Forum.

ACTION 11 – NNSS to further explore suggested programme topics for the Forum.

12. Volunteering

NM informed the Board that he had approached several of the key environmental volunteering organizations to try and obtain figures on volunteer effort directed at NNS, of which several have already provided feedback. AR said that BTCV Scotland are very keen to progress this agenda.

ACTION 12 - NM to prepare paper for next PB to summarise figures on volunteer effort and future possibilities.

13. Legislation

IH told the Board that the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Bill was at the end of the first Parliamentary stage. Officials had provided evidence for the Committee stage and the Minister would do so on 3 November.

14. Emerging issues

There were no emerging issues to report.

15. AOB

AR reported the successful Ministerial launch of the second phase of the Be Plant Wise campaign in Scotland.

HT reported that the second phase of the release of the Japanese Knotweed psyllid had been delayed. This was due to the slow build-up of the psyllid population at the original release sites.

HT said that the Eagle Owl risk assessment has now been finalised and advice will be submitted to Ministers shortly.

16. Date and location of future meetings

The next meeting should be held in early February, either in London (possibly the Scotland Office) or in Bristol.

ACTION 13 – VH to make arrangements for the next PB meeting in early February, either in London (possibly the Scotland Office) or in Bristol.
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FM closed the meeting by thanking the Scottish Government for their hospitality on this occasion.