

3RD PROGRAMME BOARD MEETING ON NON-NATIVE SPECIES

Minutes

11.00, 19th July 2006,
Millennium Stadium, Cardiff

Present:

Hilary Thompson, WSC, Defra (Chair)	(HJT)
Niall Moore, Secretariat	(NM)
Diane Owen, Secretariat	(DO)
Stephen Hunter, PHD, Defra	(SH)
Angela Robinson, SEERAD	(AR)
Ian McLean, JNCC	(IM)
Pete Robertson, CSL	(PR)
Peter Macnab, HMRC	(PM)
Michael Dunn, WAG	(MD)
Richard Cowan, ASFFW, Defra	(RC)

1. Apologies

Huw Thomas, WSC, Defra.	(HT)
Mike Roberts, CSL (Pete Robertson standing in).	(MR)
Peter Starling, HMRC (Peter Macnab standing in).	(PS)
Michael Rossell, DfT.	(MR)

2. Minutes of meeting on 19th April 2006 (PB July06-02)

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

3. Matters arising

None.

4. Actions (Annex 1) (PB July06-04, PB July06-04a)

- a) NM to complete for next meeting.

Action:

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| 1. NM to circulate Defra and SEERAD organigrams before next PB. |
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- b) Completed.
c) Ongoing.
d) Completed. SH informed the PB that the Working Party on Risk Associated with the International Plant Trade had their first meeting recently. SH agreed to give the minutes of the meeting to the Secretariat to circulate to the PB.

Actions:

2. SH to give the Secretariat minutes of the first WG on Risk Associated with the International Plant Trade.
3. Secretariat to circulate minutes of the first WG on Risk Associated with the International Plant Trade.

- e) Completed.
- f) DO tabled two spider diagrams (PB July06-12a,b) describing the Non-native Species Mechanism including the links between the PB, Secretariat and members of the PB. The diagrams also described which organisations the PB members represented. SEERAD are representing the Scottish Working Group (SWG) and this should also be indicated on the diagram.

Actions:

4. DO to add the SWG to the spider diagram and circulate diagrams to PB.
5. PB to give feedback on the spider diagrams to Secretariat by Friday 25th August.

- g) Ongoing and discussed under item 10 (PB July06-10).
- h) Ongoing and discussed under item 7 (PB July06-07).
- i) Producing a list of contacts for emergency situations is part of the remit for the Strategy Working Group, which is ongoing. However, the PB discussed the urgent need for an interim list of contacts in the short-term. The PB agreed that contact details for each area were necessary and agreed to provide the Secretariat with relevant contact details.

Actions:

6. PB to provide the secretariat with contact details for an interim list of contacts for emergency situations.
7. NM to collate and develop the list of contacts for emergency situations and to circulate to the PB for comments.

- j) It was agreed that recruitment of an AO for the Secretariat would be deferred until Diane Owen settled into her job and the needs of the secretariat became clearer.
- k) As future funding needs of the secretariat are uncertain at this stage this action was deferred. A need for funding the Risk Assessment Panel was identified but exact details cannot be clarified until the Panel has progressed further. The need for flexible funds for prevention, control and eradication of NNS was discussed and exact details of such funding would have to be considered case by case.
- l) NM has discussed the proposal for a Secretariat website with the Defra Webmaster, who's response was that all Defra websites have to conform to the Defra template/style with very little flexibility. NM's vision for the website is for a bright, exciting website with lots of pictures and links and a 'latest news' section for emerging issues such as *Ludwigia*, non-native Bumble Bees and Bullfrogs. DO has explored the possibility of using CSL's IT department to produce a website independent from

CSL and Defra, similar to the Beebase (www.beebase.csl.gov.uk) and eFishBusiness (www.efishbusiness.co.uk) websites. The PB agreed that the website should include: links (including to Beebase, eFishBusiness, PHD, SEERAD, WAG, JNCC, WSC, EA and CEFAS), Codes of Practice, legislation, climate change and 2010 issues, contacts if NNS are found, FAQs and a guide to NNS. The website will need editorial control, with the PB members providing feedback on a draft website to be circulated by the Secretariat.

Action:

8. DO to circulate a draft website to the PB before the next meeting.

- m) The PB found the proposals for the Sounding Board (SB) (outlined in PB July06-04a) satisfactory. The SB will meet on an *ad hoc* basis as issues arise and meetings could also be tied into PB meetings (in advance of them to raise relevant issues) and potentially at the annual Stakeholders Forum.
- n) Membership of the SB was discussed and the PB agreed that the SB will need complete geographical representation, individuals will need to be identified rather than organisations, and duplication of experts (e.g. specific experts from England, Wales and Scotland) should be avoided.

Action:

9. PB to comment on the list (in PB July06-04a) of potential SB members and to give the Secretariat contact details of potential members.

- o) Completed. AR raised the concerns of the Scottish Working Group (SWG) about the Companion Animal Code of Practice. The SWG were concerned that the definition gives an artificial distinction within the invasive non-native species context and that the code could be extended to include all captive animals. There was also concern that many people will not understand the term "companion animal" and there was the possibility that the code would not be read and would, therefore, be ineffective. The PB discussed the scope of the Companion Animal Code of Practice concluding that the code should cover those animals kept for non-commercial purposes, there being other legislation that covers animals kept in zoo and wildlife parks.
- p) Completed.
- q) Completed.

5. Secretariat report

(PB July06-05)

The PB gave positive feedback on the activities of the Secretariat since the last meeting. NM had increased the visibility of the Secretariat and began to build links and contacts with key stakeholder organisations. It was suggested that the Secretariat build links with Natural England when it is established (both with management and specialists). NM will meet with Ruth Waters and Tony Mitchell-Jones very shortly (before Ruth goes on maternity leave). MD suggested that increased visibility in Wales would be a good idea and suggested attending the November Wales Biodiversity Group meeting. SH

suggested that contact should be established with the Defra Illegal Imports Team.

Actions:

10. NM to set up meeting with the Defra Illegal Imports Team.
11. NM to contact DOENI to discuss the GB remit of the PB.
12. NM to attend the November Wales Biodiversity Group meeting.

6. Stakeholder Forum

(PB July06-06)

NM introduced the paper on the Annual Stakeholder Forum. Feedback from attendees was positive and they were pleased that something was being done to tackle the problems. They commented that there was a good balance between talks and strategy discussion. A group of attendees suggested that a Q&A session with government representatives was needed. At the 2005 forum there was a Q&A session with a panel of government and non-government representatives. The next Forum is likely to be in April 2007. An independent chair for a Q&A session and topics for discussion need to be considered well in advance of the next forum.

Action:

13. PB to think of suitable topics for discussion for the next Forum as well as a potential independent chair for the Q&A session.

7. Strategy Working Group

(PB July06-07, PB July06-07a)

HJT introduced the paper on the SWG as HT was not present. Membership has expanded and new members are listed in PB July06-07. It was suggested that the Strategy WG could be further strengthened by inclusion of a marine representative. As requested by the Strategy WG the PB discussed 'the extent of the marine remit to be embraced by the strategy'. Proposed suggestions included:

- The strategy should cover areas where there is a valid enforcement mechanism (i.e. up to 1 mile from the coast).
 - Take a staged approach and begin with covering 1 mile from the coast.
 - The strategy should cover the same areas as the Biodiversity Regulations.
 - Take a pathway focused approach and cover where there are threats.
- This approach was most favoured by the Programme Board.

The board suggested that the Strategy WG investigate the IMO regulations and contact the IMO Group.

Part of the Strategy WG remit is to produce a strategy for contingency measures. There was considerable discussion on how this work could be funded and where responsibility lies for responding to particular contingencies. NM was asked to investigate funds for a contingency response and was tasked (with HT on his return) with visiting the Defra

sponsors of EA and NE. PHD has a budget with arrangements, which allow flexibility in cases of emergency.

Actions:

14. Strategy WG to invite a maritime representative for the Strategy WG.
15. Strategy WG to investigate the IMO regulations.
16. NM to distribute list of proposed contacts for Audit of Responsibilities contract to the PB.
17. Secretariat to communicate the PB's suggestions with regards to the marine remit to the Strategy WG.
18. NM and HT to visit the Defra sponsors of EA and NE to discuss their corporate priorities.

8. Talk on 'Crayfish in the Wye' by Chris Dyson (CCW)

CD gave the PB a presentation outlining the efforts being made to control a population of Signal Crayfish in a tributary of the River Wye and nearby ponds. Signal Crayfish have been present in the ponds and river for 15 years. In summary, a feasibility study is being carried out involving summer and winter trapping regimes, with more intensive trapping in the summer, as crayfish are less active in winter. Native White-clawed Crayfish are absent from the tributary. Trapping is so far very successful, catching 5888 crayfish between 8th June and 4th July. CCW is currently considering potential use of biocides as explored in a feasibility study carried out in Scotland and NW England using natural Pyrethrum. CD and the PB discussed the costs and benefits of using biocides in watercourses. It was suggested that trapping should continue in an attempt to control population growth and expansion downstream, while investigating other methods to eradicate the population.

9. Emerging issues: *Ludwigia*, Chipmunks

(PB July06-09)

NM gave a brief synopsis of emerging problems with *Ludwigia* and Siberian Chipmunks. He also tabled a brief description of a new emerging problem with Bullfrogs in Essex (PB July06-09a) and SH and IM gave an update on the current non-native Bumble Bee problem. Emerging issues are good examples for the Secretariat website and will be added to the website as it is developed. All emerging NNS problems will be recorded in a log, which will be maintained by Secretariat.

1. The PB recognised that *Ludwigia* is a high-risk species that has the potential to become a serious problem and that immediate action is required. The PB noted that *Ludwigia* is still available for sale and more releases are likely. The PB considered that *Ludwigia* is primarily an EA responsibility.
2. Siberian Chipmunks are potentially a large problem because of rapid breeding and population growth as observed in Brussels. The single escaped population in southern England is believed to have been eliminated.
3. Bullfrogs have already been successfully eradicated in Kent by EN, however the costs involved in draining the six ponds in Essex are higher than

Comment [AC1]: I was under the impression that the keepers thought there were no more around – but the time delay before some were recaptured suggests there might still be some there??

the previous eradication project (£120K). There are no current measures being taken to control this population.

4. Non-native sub-species of Bumble Bee have been imported from the Continent to pollinate plants in poly-tunnels and glasshouses because they are better pollinators than native sub-species. The potential problems include hybridisation with native subspecies and spread of disease. The PB recognised that this problem needed addressing urgently.

When the risk assessment panel is set up, its needs to be decided under what circumstances an emerging issue should be put to the Panel for formal assessment. The PB must also decide how it will utilise the outputs.

Action:

19. NM to prepare a more detailed briefing on the *Ludwigia* and Bumble Bee situation for HJT to use to persuade the appropriate people that urgent action is needed.

10. Risk assessment

(PB July06-10)

AR introduced the Risk Assessment Peer Review Project. This is being funded by Defra and SEERAD and RPS are carrying out the work. It will report at the beginning of December 2006. AR tabled a list of species and pathways to be trialled during the project (PB July06-10a). The list included several examples of species that threaten the UK Overseas Territories as well as GB. RPS are assessing Japanese Knotweed themselves and other species are being given to specialists in other organisations to assess.

NM introduced a paper that proposes the way forward towards setting up a Risk Assessment Panel. The paper was discussed and it was concluded that the remit of the Risk Assessment Panel should be broad. It was also concluded that there needed to be a small core group of risk assessment experts who are able to call upon other experts for particular species. Email and phone communication was thought to be more appropriate for the Panel than setting up meetings. Resourcing issues need to be further explored.

Actions:

20. NM to proceed as outlined in the Risk Assessment Panel document (PB July06-10) and to report back to the PB before the next meeting.
21. NM to include guidance on how to prioritise risk assessments in the revised Risk Assessment Panel paper.

Comment [AC2]: Sorry I got it wrong at the meeting.

Next meeting: 11.00 Wednesday 25th October 2006, Board Room, CSL, York.

ANNEX 1.**2ND PROGRAMME BOARD MEETING ON NON-NATIVE SPECIES**

10:30am, 19 April 2006
Royal Scots Club, Edinburgh

Actions (PB July06-04)

Ref	Details	Deadline	Completed?
a)	Defra and SEERAD to circulate to Board members updated organograms.	Before next PB	No
b)	The job description for the administrative HEO post (shortly to be advertised) to be circulated by the Secretariat to the Board for comments.	Before next PB	Yes
c)	ASFFW to keep the Board up to date with progress on its development of a risk assessment based on the plant health model.	Ongoing	
d)	PHD to provide for circulation by the Secretariat, the terms of reference and membership for the working group established following the Reading University horticultural seminar.	Before next PB	Yes, hard copies circulated.
e)	WAG agreed to investigate provision of a venue in Cardiff for the 19 July meeting of the Programme Board.	Before next PB	Yes
f)	The Secretariat to re-draft the table showing the relationships between the Board, working groups and Secretariat.	Before next PB	Yes
g)	The re-branded Science and Surveillance working group should be established at the earliest opportunity by the Secretariat.	Before next PB	Ongoing <u>Paper 10</u>
h)	Defra to investigate taking forward the audit of responsibilities as soon as possible.	Before next PB	Yes <u>Paper 07</u>
i)	The Secretariat to establish a list of implementation contacts for emergency situations.	(Under remit of Strategy working group)	
j)	The Secretariat to draft a strong business case for recruiting an AO and to circulate to the Board the job description for this post.	Deferred	<u>Paper 05</u>
k)	The Secretariat to investigate funding needs (other than salaries).	Deferred	Verbal update
l)	The Secretariat to liaise with Defra's Communications Directorate about establishing a website.	Before next PB	Yes Verbal update
m)	The Secretariat to draft and circulate a remit for the stakeholder working group/sounding board.	Before next PB	Yes <u>Paper 04a</u>
n)	Board members to provide names of suitable candidates for inclusion in a stakeholder working group/ sounding board.	Before next PB	
o)	Defra to investigate the feasibility of including fish	Before next	Yes – fish

	in the Companion Animal Code of Practice.	PB	now included.
p)	Defra to circulate the list of invitees to the Annual Forum and the list of those that have responded so far, so that Board members could ensure there are no significant omissions.	Within 2 weeks	Yes
q)	Defra to take into account Programme Board comments in continuing preparations for the Annual Forum on 24 May.	Within 2 weeks	Yes