

## Wales Biodiversity Partnership Invasive Non Native Species Group

EAW Offices, Newport Road, Cardiff

Wednesday 14th December 2011 10:30-15:30  
17<sup>th</sup> Meeting

### Minutes

#### Attendees

Rob Griffiths (Chair)	RG	WG
Alys Edwards (Secretariat)	AE	WBP
Ian Guildford	IG	SWP
Mike McCabe (by phone)	MMc	CCW
Judith Oakley	JO	Oakley Intertidal
Mark Malins	MM	FCW
Lizzie Wilberforce	LW	WTSWW
Edward Negro	EN	WG
Alison Smith	AS	WG
Sean Hathaway	SH	City and County of Swansea
Niall Moore	NM	GBNNS

#### Apologies

Sarah Bird	Chester Zoo
Dave Thorpe	EAW
Matthew Ellis	CCW
Ceri Jones	EAW
David Gilchrist	HTA
Ziggy Otto	CCW
Nigel Ajax-Lewis	WTSWW
Jenni Hartley	WG
Paul Stebbing	CEFAS
Nick Birula	NB
Richard Poole	RP
Gabe Wyn	CCW

#### 1. Feedback from other meetings

The Chair informed the group that a decision to bring together the Forestry Commission Wales, Countryside Council for Wales and the Environment Agency Wales in a single body has been taken by John Griffiths, Welsh Government Environment Minister. A programme board made up of staff from the three

organisations and Welsh Government will move this work forward over the coming months.

The timings of the proposed Environment Bill has now slipped to 2015, with the Green Paper published in late January 2012.

The annual round of NERC compliance visits with local Authorities will commence in the New Year.

## 2. Update on ERDC Funding

RG informed the group that the Ecosystem Resilience and Diversity Compliance Funds have now been allocated and will be spent by 31 March 2012. Two non-native projects were successful; £250k for Didemnum eradication in Holyhead, removal of Rhododendron from Cwm Dulais.

<b>ACTION 1.</b> RG to circulate list of successful ERDC project bids to all.
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## 3. Japanese Knotweed

RG announced that the Sustainability and Environmental Evidence Division (SEED) have requested rapid research review for Japanese knotweed.

RICS is consulting on a new information paper to help valuers and mortgage lenders consider the implications of a Japanese knotweed intrusion when undertaking valuations of residential property in the UK. Comments are invited from members, lenders and Japanese knotweed treatment experts. Current deadline for comments is 13 December 2011. SH noted that Swansea have direct evidence of property valuations (domestic) being valued at nil and this should be fed in.

<b>ACTION 2.</b> AE to contact RICS and ask if we can submit comments after the deadline.
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<b>ACTION 3.</b> SH to draft initial response to RICS consultation on JK and AE to circulate to the group for comment.
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<b>ACTION 4.</b> RG to feedback on Japanese Knotweed research review at next meeting
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<b>ACTION 5.</b> AS to forward AE electronic copy of JK control doc for circulation to the group.
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## 4. RBMP INNS Measures

NB was unable to attend so an update will be circulated electronically following the meeting.

#### 5. Liaison with animal welfare organisations

RG informed the group that the issue has been discussed internally by WG and no formal position has been agreed upon as yet. Likely response is that WG will take a watching brief and treat each issue on a case by case basis.

LW commented that a large number of cases are dealt with by vets and questioned whether there may be merit in approaching the issue through the Royal College of Veterinary Medicine or through the Chief Veterinary Officer

<b>ACTION 6.</b> RG to contact relevant department within WG to discuss communication with RCVM over the issue of non-natives.
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#### 6. Evidence needs

All WBP Wales-level groups are asked to consider where the evidence/data gaps exist, that need to be filled in order to support requests for policy/ regulatory/ management action.

Gaps will be addressed through engagement with our new pool of Ecosystem Group academics and research institutions in Wales, partly through targeted research. And will also be presented to Welsh Government to inform biodiversity research priorities for Wales.

Key issues identified by the group include; biosecurity and best practice management, pathway management of marine NNS (linked to Aliens II project), training and communications.

NM commented that it would be useful to build this evidence base now as we head towards a European Directive in 2012 and noted that often some of the simplest information is unavailable to support assumptions such as number of deer parks in the UK, inventory of species kept in zoos, what is being sold in individual garden centres etc.

A number of potential projects exist which could potentially be undertaken by Undergraduates. However, in order to focus resources where it is most needed the areas of work need to be prioritised, and this should be linked to the work that is ongoing to prioritise the Welsh Risk Assessment document.

<b>ACTION 7.</b> NM to forward Draft UK evidence needs paper to AE
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**ACTION 8.** AE to draft evidence needs spreadsheet and circulate to all for comment.

NM informed the group that CEFAS is looking at aquatic biosecurity for Defra, summarising existing information. Outputs will be circulated once available.

RG informed the group that a draft discussion paper on the need for marine biosecurity guidance has been drafted and comments on this would be welcome. AS noted that a best practice document has been compiled in areas such as Scotland which could be of use.

**ACTION 9.** RG to circulate marine biosecurity discussion paper to all for comment.

**ACTION 10.** NM to circulate programme board biosecurity paper to all for info.

#### 7. Update on ongoing INNS Projects around Wales/Action Audit

AE informed the group that the Action Audit has been amended and split into two documents to reflect current and historic INNS projects in Wales. Both documents will be held on the INNS pages of the WBP website and updated periodically.

**ACTION 11.** AE to circulate Action Audit to all for comment.

**ACTION 12.** ALL to review Action Audit documents and complete where gaps exist.

#### 8. Forward Planning

The group agreed that the Risk Assessment prioritisation will help inform work plan of the INNS group and this should be revisited once this work has been completed.

AE informed the group that Jo has yet to received comments on the prioritisation document and it was agreed that this would be better progressed face to face at the February meeting, although it will be important to ensure attendance from as many people as possible.

**ACTION 13.** AE to add prioritisation of the Risk Assessment as main agenda item for February meeting

**ACTION 14.** ALL to send any comments, prior to the February meeting, to JH [j.hughes@ccw.gov.uk](mailto:j.hughes@ccw.gov.uk) and cc in AE [a.edwards@welshwildlife.org](mailto:a.edwards@welshwildlife.org)

**ACTION 15.** ALL to attend February meeting or send representative.

## 9. GB/Europe Update

RG updated the group on the work on the British Irish Council, which has involvement of all the administrations of UK councils and dependencies. Wales leads on two strands; environment and young people, which leads to direct Ministerial contact and can influence Ministerial debate on these two issues. The next meeting will be held in September, where INNS and biodiversity will be discussed.

NM provided an update on the development of an EU Strategy on Invasive Alien (Non-native) Species, which is expected in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2012. Legislation will include EU black-list species which can't be imported, traded or kept and it is likely that member states will be requested to develop their own black lists. Public consultation is expected in first quarter of 2012.

Huw Thomas is leading on UK policy response. However this does not preclude individual administrations discussing with their own stakeholders and forming their own positions.

NM informed the group that GBNNSS have secured a temporary part-time post to develop partnership marketing. Work is likely to focus on Be Plant Wise and Check Clean Dry campaigns and will be identifying priority organisations to liaise with throughout the UK.

A garden centre training video is currently being developed to inform staff of the risks of non-natives. Biosecurity posters are also being developed, similar to those produced previously by the National Trust.

AS informed the group that the training working group has met three times with a workshop held in York in October. A draft report will be prepared for the media and communications group early next year, which is likely to suggest the need for a themed approach.

FSC have been approached in order to produce an ID guide to INNS – either as a separate card or tagged on to existing communications and ID cards.

NM informed the group a species alert has been issued for Asian Hornet. As such there is a need to increase awareness throughout the UK. There is a need to involve LAs across England and Wales and begin communications with relevant individuals in pest control departments. Any rapid response is likely to be coordinated by the National Bee Unit ([www.nationalbeeunit.co.uk](http://www.nationalbeeunit.co.uk))

<p><b>ACTION 16.</b> AE to ask LA Ecologists to provide contact details for head of pest control departments and forward to NM in as a matter of urgency, in order to develop contingency plan.</p>
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The Annual Stakeholder Forum will take place on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2012 in Birmingham and a Local Action Group Workshop (LAG) will be held at the end of January, funded by Defra.

**ACTION 17.** NM to confirm date and location of Annual Stakeholder Forum.

Finally NM informed the group that the final NNSIP (species information portal) report to Defra will be available in the New Year.

**ACTION 18.** NM to circulate final NNSIP Report once available.

#### 10. Actions from previous meeting

MM informed the group that a Wales Wild Deer Management Action Plan stakeholder meeting was held on 03 December. Key messages and comments have been circulated to all invited and attending stakeholders. Following the meeting the Steering Group met and made changes to the draft action plan, this has now been passed to the Minister.

MM noted that he had still not received the action plan template and has therefore been unable to complete for sika deer.

**ACTION 19.** NM to chase up action plan template and feedback to MM.

**ACTION 20.** AE to contact Craig Mitchell regarding Asian hornet and see if WLGA can help with awareness raising and rapid response.

**ACTION 21.** NM to ask Huw Thomas to reconvene the Rapid Response group in order to discuss growing issues with RR/ consents etc

#### AOB

The Sika deer project (EW funded) has received an enquiry from the Minister as to the extent of the project.

Carmarthen Bay and Estuaries European Marine Site (CBEEMS) are currently consulting on their management plan, a copy of which is available on their website <http://english.cbeems.org/management/>. There is currently no reference to INNS and this is something which should be addressed.

NM requested Wales contribute funds for the maintenance of the GBNNSS website.

**ACTION 22.** RG to explore possibility of Wales contributing funds to the GBNNSS website.

**Date of next meeting: 28<sup>th</sup> February 2012, location tbc**

### **Summary of Actions**

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