

## WBP Species Expert Group Meeting 16

Newtown, 28<sup>th</sup> January 2016

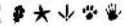
**Attendees:** Liz Howe, co-Chair (NRW); Stephen Bladwell, co-Chair (RSPB Cymru); Sean McHugh, Secretariat (WBP); Steve Lucas (BCT); Lizzie Wilberforce (WTW/WTSWW); Russel Hobson (Butterfly Conservation Wales); Clare Dinham (Buglife); Genevieve Dalley (British Dragonfly Society); Ray Woods (BSBI/British Lichen Society); Tracey Lovering (Plantlife Cymru -Wales Lower Plants and Fungi Officer); John Wilkinson (Amphibian & Reptile Conservation); Hannah Shaw (Freshwater Habitats Trust); Matthew Ellis (NRW - via telephone)

**Apologies:** Liz Halliwell (NRW); Jean Matthews (NRW); Sam Bosanquet (NRW/BBS); Sian Whitehead (NRW); Geoff Hobbs (Bridgend CBC); Colin Cheesman (Plantlife Cymru); Sinead Lynch (Bumblebee Conservation); Sara Bird (Chester Zoo)

No.	Update/Action	Who by/when	Additional comments
1	<p>Partner updates</p> <p>SEG members will send in their updates electronically. Updates to be added to the WBP website (SEG page)</p> <p>Sean to post the updates on the SEG web page</p>	<p>All</p> <p>SM</p>	<p>Species Expert Group web page: <a href="http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/Species-Expert-Group">http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/Species-Expert-Group</a></p> <p>The last SEG update is Dec 2014 so a fresh update would be useful</p>
2	<p><b>State of Nature Report II</b></p> <p>The report will feature a main section on UK nature status and individual country reports. The Wales report will incorporate additional data sets and will therefore show more trends across Wales than the original 2013 report. The launch date of the report has yet to be confirmed.</p> <p>Ray Woods enquired if BSBI &amp; British Lichen Society had been involved. SB confirmed that they had been involved though centralised UK contacts</p>	<p>Stephen to send BSBI UK contact to Ray</p>	<p><b>Background</b></p> <p>In 2013, the <a href="#">State of Nature Report</a> found that 60 per cent of UK species studied had declined in recent decades.</p> <p>In 2015 'The Response for Nature project' was published which outlined a set of actions the project team identified to arrest the declines. You can read the Response for Nature Wales report <a href="#">here</a></p> <p>The reports for all the devolved nations can be accessed <a href="#">here</a></p>

	<p>Law Commission Report The Law Commission have recently published the <a href="#">final report and draft Bill</a> on Wildlife Law (England &amp; Wales). In it they recommend that the patchwork of existing wildlife legislation be replaced by a single statute. In their view, the new statute would bring together the law governing the protection, control and management of wildlife to make it more consistent, easier to understand and simpler to use. Some of their recommendations, relating to the control of invasive non-native species and published in a separate report in February 2014, were given effect in the Infrastructure Act 2015. The UK Government will respond to the Law Commission's findings and this newsletter will update on future developments.</p> <p>Stephen &amp; Liz noted that discussions within WG, NRW and Defra are on-going and it's unlikely the WG &amp; UK will respond before the EU referendum.</p>		<p>Law Commission Report link: <a href="http://www.lawcom.gov.uk/project/wildlife-law/">http://www.lawcom.gov.uk/project/wildlife-law/</a></p> <p>Consultation on the draft code of practice for species control provisions in Wales link: <a href="http://gov.wales/consultation/environmentandcountryside/code-of-practice-species-contol/?lang=en">http://gov.wales/consultation/environmentandcountryside/code-of-practice-species-contol/?lang=en</a></p> <p>Species Control Orders to tackle invasive non-native species link: <a href="http://www.nonnativespecies.org/news/index.cfm?id=147">http://www.nonnativespecies.org/news/index.cfm?id=147</a></p>
<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>WBP Chairs Meeting.</b></p> <p>The group chairs last met in July 2015 and there has not been a meeting in the interim- <b><i>Correction- A WBP Chairs meeting was held in October 2015- meeting actions are available on the WBP website</i></b> <a href="http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/Ecosystem-Group-Chairs">http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/Ecosystem-Group-Chairs</a></p> <p>Ecosystem groups are continuing to meet- the NRP governance and the Natural Resource Management framework will influence the future work of the Ecosystem Groups and Species</p>	<p>Steve Lucas to send Sean NRP for circulation (done)</p>	

<p>Expert Groups</p> <p><b>Wales Biodiversity Strategy Board (WBSB) update (Steve Lucas).</b></p> <p>The WBSB last me met in December 2015. The meeting was an opportunity to see the latest draft of the NRP which has subsequently been signed off by the Minister and parts i) and ii) were published on 23<sup>rd</sup> December. The NRP consists of 3 sections: i) strategy outline; ii) action plan iii) governance framework. Parts ii) and iii) are work in progress and there is an opportunity to influence the actions and governance. Getting the right actions will be crucial</p> <p>There is no date set for the next WBSB meeting.</p> <p>Note: A series of task &amp; finish groups are active. Evidence &amp; monitoring; Engagement group; RDP; the Governance group has yet to meet</p> <p><i>NGO representatives at WBSB meetings (BCT; BC; WT; RSPB)- influencing role &amp; advisory role to WG on biodiversity issues.</i></p> <p><b>Environment Bill (Steve Lucas)</b> Stage 3 reading of the Bill took place on 26<sup>th</sup> January. Most amendments were voted through. WEL have worked hard on the Bill on issues such as openness, transparency NNRP process; strengthening the Biodiversity Duty which now will link to the section 7 list (Section 42); and adoption of the precautionary principle. Due to an anomaly; the definition of</p>		<p>Environment Bill amendments link: <a href="http://www.senedd.assembly.wales/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Ild=12572">http://www.senedd.assembly.wales/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?Ild=12572</a></p>
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<p>Biodiversity contained in the Bill does not match the CBD biodiversity definition. The Bill committed to producing guidance on the precautionary principle and the Biodiversity Duty. Area Statements will cover all of Wales (out to 12 nautical miles).</p> <p>The amendment relating to the wording on the preventative principle with respect to 'environmental degradation' was changed to 'significant' to match European and domestic legislation.</p> <p>The carrier bag levy will have to go to environmental good causes in Wales (whilst respecting existing arrangements).</p> <p>Note: all amendments listed above are subject to scrutiny &amp; will be voted on in the Senedd in early February. The Bill will then pass to Stage 4 (possibility of some minor alterations) in preparation to receiving royal assent in spring 2016</p> <p><b>Biodiversity Indicators</b> Wales is developing a set of biodiversity indicators. A clear direction yet to emerge on the format and discussions are ongoing. In terms of the s7 (S42) list, WG will undertake a review of the list with NRW and expert groups. In the first instance the 'old' S42 list will be carried over to the s7 list then undergo review. Also, the Well Being &amp; Future Generations Act requires an indicator set which includes a 'Healthy ecosystem's' indicator and a biodiverse natural environment' indicator as a</p>		<p><b>Background on Priority Species &amp; habitat lists</b> The first set of lists is referred to as the Section 74 list; this was amended in 2006 and became known as the Section 42 (S42) list. When the Environment Bill becomes law, the S42 list will become the Section 7 list in the first instance and then undergo review.</p>
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<p>measure of the wellbeing goals. Also there are UK Biodiversity Indicators which give general trends. Wales could adopt its own suite of indicators or modify UK indicators.</p> <p>JNCC, CEH and NBN are also involved in indicator development as are NRW &amp; CEH for SoNNAR. There is also the possibility the GMEP indicators could be adopted to form a set of environmental indicators. The WBSB has an Improving Evidence task &amp; finish group which whose work also takes in indicators. There is considerable overlap and a number of meetings are taking place and the picture will become clearer in the coming months.</p> <p>Steve Lucas also mentioned the CBD report published in April 2014 - Fifth National Report to the United Nation Convention on Biological Diversity: United Kingdom. The report gives a useful context and baseline.</p> <p>SEG has a clear role to play in feeding into the indicator work particularly with respect to the new s7 list. SEG's support of recording schemes will also be valuable.</p> <p>Liz mentioned the WBP Conference workshop which looked at priority species provision in the new priority list as well as the context for the priority species list.</p> <p>The 2003 Species audit carried out by CCW for WBP will be useful in the above work</p>	<p>Liz Howe to circulate the background papers (S74) used in the WBP conference workshop (done)</p>	<p>Fifth National Report to the United Nation Convention on Biological Diversity: United Kingdom Link: <a href="https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/gb/gb-nr-05-en.pdf">https://www.cbd.int/doc/world/gb/gb-nr-05-en.pdf</a></p>
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	<p>Stephen to investigate England's work selecting the criteria for the Section 41 list (equivalent of Wales' S42 list) and circulate the paper if available</p>	<p>Stephen to send CD-ROM of species review in Wales (2003) to Steve Lucas – SL may be able to open the CD as modern laptops don't recognise the format</p> <p>Stephen to circulate S42 paper</p>	
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>Evidence Gaps</b></p> <p>SEG are encouraged to add in evidence gaps and in particular add in project proposals (send to Alys Morris) including literature review projects (template on the website). Partnership projects and collaborations are strongly encouraged. The project has gained momentum and is now part of the evidence for the WBSB Evidence T&amp;F Group. A number of project proposals have been taken forward by academic institutions/students with the total around 10.</p> <p>Also, it will be useful for Welsh projects as part of the Defra research funding. The Pollinator Project can also feed in pollinator research.</p> <p>JNCC have a facilitator based in Cardiff (Kate Orford) who links JNCC- NRW-WG research</p> <p>There is an Evidence Gaps LinkedIn group where you can discuss issues and you can also contact Mike Bruford who is heavily involved in the project (contact details on the Evidence Gaps web page)</p>	<p>All to add in species gaps and project proposals</p> <p>Liz Howe to send Russel Kate's details (done)</p>	<p>Evidence Gaps Project <a href="http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/WBP-Evidence-Gaps-Project">http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/WBP-Evidence-Gaps-Project</a></p> <p>WBP Evidence Gaps Project on Linked-in <a href="https://www.linkedin.com">https://www.linkedin.com</a></p> <p>Alys Morris contact: MorrisA18@cardiff.ac.uk</p>

	Steve L to circulate details of project to BCT head office		
5	<p>SEG work plan/membership review.</p> <p><b>Workplan</b> The workplan expires in February 2016 so a new plan is needed. Ideas include developing the Section 7 species list; species habitat integration work; compilation of an annual review of species in Wales outlining key actions for NGO's &amp; statutory bodies and any gaps; ,environment bill input; Glastir input; Grants input- would be useful to monitor the outputs of WG environment grants i.e. what is the impact for species</p>	<p>Sean to contact group members who don't normally attend &amp; ask if they still wish to be involved with the group as core or corresponding members</p> <p>Sean to contact Vincent Wildlife Trust (Natalie) &amp; ask if VWT would like to become involved with SEG</p> <p>Sean to draft workplan for approval at future meeting (winter 2016 meeting)</p>	
6	<p>AOB</p> <p>Liz Howe mentioned that NRW are closing some regional offices e.g. Newtown. Library resources will be catalogued and some will be digitised and stored centrally in Bangor. New content is being added to the NRW library on the main NRW website. NRW working with JNCC on updating SSSI guidelines. Natural England is taking the lead with vascular plant and invertebrates with</p>		

<p>input from NRW and other country agencies. The review will also cover habitats.</p> <p>6<sup>th</sup> Quinquennial review- the review address schedule 5 and schedule 8 species on the Wildlife &amp; Countryside Act. The paperwork has gone to Defra, The most recent review focused on making the list more relevant.</p> <p>Great Crested Newt (GCN) guidelines- Scottish Natural Heritage are looking at the guidelines based on a UK draft from 5 years. Wales could potentially follow suit. The Defra GCN Task Force are looking at implications of the legislation on mitigation and compensations measures and are conducting a draft pilot with Woking Council. One idea is to add together mitigation sites based on the spatial plan rather than individual site mitigation. Liz Howe and Matthew Ellis are involved with the Defra GCN task Force.</p> <p>Ray Woods cited the importance of land management expertise given by NRW to landowners particularly with Glastir advice. Recognised that staff cuts mean NRW staffs are recycled into areas where they don't have the expertise. SEG organisations could have a role in training but would need expenses covered.</p> <p>BARS- Holly York (WBP) is available to offer BARS training</p> <p>Stephen is producing a template to provide a status assessment</p>	<p>Sean to put Ray in touch with Holly</p> <p>Stephen to circulate template to SEG for</p>	<p>Quinquennial review link: <a href="http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-6194">http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-6194</a></p>
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	<p>for species (red list; traffic light criteria; expert assessment) and has worked up the birds list. The template covers habitat affinity (broad habitat &amp; priority habitat) and is complementary to the species habitat integration work. Input required on how we bring the data together to produce an overall assessment. A simple graphic could be the optimal way but input welcomed. An assessment that covered risk management and specific interventions for targeted species (not covered by species- habitat integration work) would be useful.</p> <p>Overall the work will produce a statement on those species that are threatened and could be filtered to highlight priority species.</p>	<p>comment</p> <p>Steve Lucas to send Stephen bat data</p> <p>SEG T&amp;F group can take this forward via email followed by a V/C meeting</p>	
<b>Standing Items</b>			
	<p><b>Date of next Meeting</b> SEG will meet on May 25<sup>th</sup> in the Elan Valley. Format -a short morning meeting followed by a field visit</p>	<p>Hannah will contact the Elan Valley Centre and investigate the arrangements.</p>	
<b>On-going actions and items</b>			
i	<p>All partners to send Sean a brief update of projects they are involved in for circulation to SEG. A rolling update can also be included on the WBP website under the SEG section</p>	<p>All/end February 2016</p>	<p>WBP website SEG link: <a href="http://biodiversitywales.org.uk/en-GB/Species">http://biodiversitywales.org.uk/en-GB/Species</a></p>
ii	<p>BARS <a href="#">BARS</a> 2 is now live - user friendly, spatial representation of actions, priority mapping from ecosystem groups is available on BARS</p>	<p>All are encouraged to Visit new BARS &amp; look for opportunities to input/comment</p>	<p>BARS link &amp; further information: <a href="http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/en-GB/Biodiversity-Action-Reporting-System-BARS">http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/en-GB/Biodiversity-Action-Reporting-System-BARS</a></p> <p>WBP Priority mapping link: <a href="http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/en-GB/Ecosystems--Species-Expert-Groups">http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/en-GB/Ecosystems--Species-Expert-Groups</a></p>

