

A strategy for BARS use in Wales - Tailoring the system to bottom up automatic reporting

The strategy for getting BARS and the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) system to work for Wales is through a bottom up system. This is because, if we break down as much of the biodiversity action as possible, being carried out in Wales, to a local level (i.e. by local biodiversity action plan (LBAP) partnership area) we will be able to form a more accurate idea of where we are succeeding at stopping biodiversity loss or achieving biodiversity gain. If actions and their outcomes were only to be recorded at an all Wales level, we would lose the resolution and be unable to focus where more work is needed.

In the bottom up system, the local biodiversity action partnerships LBAPs will hold the disaggregated targets (imagine them as “the guardians of the targets”). Though they hold the targets they are not responsible for achieving the targets on their own, this will be through the combined effort of all of the biodiversity partners working in each area.

The actions (activities carried out for biodiversity) and action goals (quantitative record of an activity, e.g. 10 ha grazed) will be recorded on BARS within LBAPs and Company/Organisation BAPs. Some smaller organisations, volunteer actions etc will be recorded directly within the LBAP. Other organisations including: Environment Agency Wales, RSPB, National Trust Wales, CCW, Forestry Commission Wales, each of the Wildlife Trusts and various WAG departments, amongst others, will have their own BAPs on BARS where they will enter their own actions. It is important that the action goal (what is quantitatively aspired to) is entered but it is also extremely important that the outcome of the action is reported by updating the progress towards action goal.

We aim to get organisations to break these actions down by LBAP area (a county or national park). Actions recorded within company/organisations BAPs need to be linked to the relevant LBAP (the one covering the location where the action is taking place). Once an action is linked to the appropriate LBAP, the recorded progress towards action goals from these actions will automatically contribute to the relevant local targets within that LBAP. This should mean that the LBAP will show all of the work going on in its area, the responsibility for updating the progress on the actions lies with the organisation that entered the action (as it is sitting within their own BAP).

So having linked all of these actions to the relevant LBAP targets we should see what contribution is being made, by everybody, to the local (disaggregated targets). This breakdown to a local level will enable us to identify where we are achieving the outcomes we want and also where we are not achieving those desired outcomes. We can then focus action and funding in those areas that have been identified as needing more help. This coordination of assessment of required actions will be carried out by the Wales Ecosystem and Species Expert Groups.

The Wales level targets will be held by the relevant Ecosystem Group or the Species Expert Group. These Wales level groups will advise on what units the targets will be set using. The local targets (held by the LBAPs) will be linked to the Wales level

targets so that they automatically add up to show progress towards Wales targets. This means that we will always be ready for the UK reporting rounds as we will be regularly updating our progress towards targets.

Partnership working:

Where a project is carried out by a partnership of organisations, the group will have to decide who will actually initially enter the action. Once entered onto BARS the action can be linked to the Company/Organisation BAPs of all partners.

The Wales Ecosystem Groups and priority habitats included within them

Ecosystem Group	Priority habitats included
Lowland Farmland	Arable Field Margins Hedgerows Traditional Orchards
Lowland Grassland and Heathland	Dry Acid Grassland Lowland Calcareous Grassland Lowland Meadows Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pastures Calaminarian Grasslands Lowland Heathland
Uplands	Upland Heathland Blanket Bog Upland Calcareous Grassland Upland Flushes, Fens and Swamps Mountain Heaths and Willow Scrub Inland Rock Outcrop and Scree Habitats Limestone Pavement
Freshwater	Eutrophic Standing Waters Mesotrophic Lakes Oligotrophic and Dystrophic Lakes Ponds Aquifer-fed Naturally Fluctuating Water Bodies Rivers (including Chalk Rivers)
Wetlands	Lowland Fens Lowland Raised Bog Reedbeds Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh
Coastal	Coastal Saltmarsh Coastal Vegetated Shingle Coastal Sand Dunes Maritime Cliff and Slopes
Marine	Intertidal underboulder communities <i>Sabellaria alveolata</i> reefs Seagrass beds Sheltered muddy gravels Peat and clay exposures Tidal swept channels Fragile sponge & anthozoan communities on subtidal rocky habitats Carbonate reefs Subtidal sands and gravels Subtidal mixed muddy sediments Mud habitats in deep water <i>Musculus discors</i> beds Blue mussel beds Horse mussel beds Maerl beds Saline Lagoons Intertidal Mudflats
Brownfield	Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land

Woodland	Lowland Beech and Yew Woodland Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland Upland Mixed Ashwoods Upland Oakwood Wet Woodland Wood Pasture and Parkland
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