

**Strategic Interventions: feedback from the ‘traffic lights’ exercise**

***Background/Progress***

At the November 2008 Steering Group meeting, WBP members were asked to contribute to an exercise to highlight what actions members think WBP should:

- keep doing (good practice)
- stop doing (bad practice)
- start doing (new practice)

under the headings Marine, Estuarine, Freshwater, Terrestrial and All Habitats.

The response was comprehensive and a full set of answers can be found in the attached annex 1.

***Plan/Proposals***

A further exercise was carried out, open to all WBP members, to help prioritise the actions resulting in the following table of key actions. We have included only the top item from each list. Although diffuse pollution appears under Freshwater attention was also drawn to pollution risks to Marine and Estuarine environments.

	<b>STOP DOING</b>	<b>START DOING</b>
<b>Marine</b>	Fishing which cannot be demonstrated to be sustainable	Marine Protected Areas
<b>Estuarine</b>	Illegal/damaging fishery operations	Increase habitat to cope with rising sea level (e.g. saltmarsh and mudflat)
<b>Freshwater</b>	Diffuse pollution by co-ordinating agri-environmental schemes – both whole farm and smaller scale landscape projects.	Catchment wide projects to deal with diffuse pollution
<b>Terrestrial</b>	Dealing with issues in isolation from wider issues	Massive push to stop declines in Wales’ priority biodiversity. Need less talk and more money!
<b>All Habitats</b>	Identifying species as “unfavourable” just because we have no data – focus on areas where we know problems are occurring first.	Get B.A.P. positive actions in all major planning applications and decisions - not just those affecting designated habitats or species- even if it’s a panel or a hedgerow or some trees rather than save dead grass as public green space

In some cases we have already been working on these actions since the original traffic lights exercise took place; brief details have been provided in the following table:

	<b>STOP DOING</b>	<b>START DOING</b>
<b>Marine</b>	Partners are already taking action to reduce fishing impacts to sustainable levels for example via, the work of the CCW grant-aided NWSFC Traeth Lafan Cockle Fishery Officer. This Officer has had a high profile presence on Traeth Lafan during the 2008/2009 fishery and has assisted with enforcing the marked access route out to the cockle beds, to avoid the sensitive mudflat and seagrass habitats. The grant-aided Officer is also developing a proposal for the long-term management of the cockle fishery itself and associated issues.	More than 30% of Welsh territorial seas are already protected by some form of designation for example Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area. The Marine and Coastal Access Bill incorporates a new power to establish Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs). It's the intention in Wales to use this power to designate a small number of MCZs that will be afforded a high level of protection - where all damaging and disturbing activities are excluded. The process of agreeing these zones will commence later this year and will have a high level of stakeholder participation. CCW are already well represented on the MCZ Project Group.
<b>Estuarine</b>	Partners are already taking action to reduce fishing impacts to sustainable levels for example via, for example, the Environment Agency's Cockle Fishery Regulating Order in the Dee Estuary and South Wales Sea Fisheries Committee's statutory prohibition on the use of dredge fishing gear in sensitive marine habitat (maerl and sea grass) in Milford Haven	Possibilities within Axis II and/or Flood Risk Management?
<b>Freshwater</b>	Limited success has been achieved under Tir Gofal e.g. reducing spraying and run off. Tir Glas has been announced and WBP members are heavily involved in drafting prescriptions for the entry level scheme.	The higher level scheme will encourage catchment scale projects for water and carbon and WBP are asked to help provide indications of suitable locations to maximise benefits to biodiversity.
<b>Terrestrial</b>	WBP's newly created ecosystem groups and policy group will help. WAG Technical Services Division are working with UK and Wales colleagues on Ecosystem approaches. A Programme Plan is currently being drawn up to pull together the various threads of this work with relevance to Wales.	Work on a new funding mechanism from CCW is taking place in parallel to attempts to identify new funds e.g. by linking Community Benefit Agreements directly to biodiversity benefits (building on lessons learned from FCW Landbank and SEMP).
<b>All Habitats</b>	The Outcome 21 Group has agreed this principle. They are providing the most up-to-date data but also encouraging skilled stakeholders to get out and obtain up-to-date information whenever possible. The strategic approach to monitoring and surveillance, currently being developed by CCW, should also assist.	The s42 guidance approved at WBP SG 7 and by Minister aims to fill this gap. A reference will be included in the new TAN 5 due for publication later this year.

An additional overarching issue that was raised during this process was the 2010 biodiversity targets. The Welsh Assembly Government are feeding into UK and EU deliberations about post 2010 targets and the Minister has admitted that we are very unlikely to hit these targets. WBP SG have not so far formally discussed the 2010 target or done an assessment of why we will fail and what needs to be done now.

***Decision Points***

- a) Which of the above actions can we take forward and how?
- b) Is the action already taken along the right lines?
- c) How does this need to change to maximise our effectiveness?
  
- d) Do we need to pause and review the 2010 targets before making these decisions?

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