

Progress on Freshwater Actions and Prioritisation of Further Actions for Work Plan, 2010

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The new BAP structure for Wales requires different ecosystem groups to produce actions and targets for biodiversity action to conserve ecosystems. The Freshwater Ecosystem Group produced draft actions and targets on 22nd April. These were consulted on during June and have now been finalised. Eighty-two actions towards Freshwater Ecosystem BAP implementation were identified.

The next stage for implementing the freshwater actions is (1) to track progress by identifying those actions that are already under way or completed and (2) to prioritise the remaining actions.

Nine actions have already been completed (Annexe 1). Many of these are preparatory work for Glastir, the new Welsh agrienvironment scheme due to be rolled out over the next two years.

A further 20 actions are under way. We have not attempted to prioritise these but we consider their completion and / or continuation essential for the Welsh BAP.

The remaining 53 actions require prioritisation to ensure that the Freshwater BAP targets can be reached in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

Prioritisation has been based on the following criteria:

- Actions that need to be carried out to pave the way for future work.
- Actions that need to be carried out as soon as possible because habitat recovery is slow.
- Strategically important actions that will inform the future direction of the BAP.
- Actions that deliver improvements on the ground.

These priority actions are listed in Table 1 and were agreed by the Freshwater Ecosystem Group at the meeting of 13th September 2010. There are up to five actions per habitat type plus four overarching actions, giving a total of thirteen priority actions.

Table 1. Top Priority Actions

FEG Action No	Ecosystem	Description of action
F2	All freshwaters	Identify sites where freshwater and wetland BAP habitats significantly complement one another, or where there is scope for improvement of one or both habitats

F6	All freshwaters	LBAP partners to identify and bring under favourable management river floodplain landscape conservation areas that can be managed as a mosaic of river, watermeadows, wet woodland and wetland
F9	All freshwaters	Devise and implement co-ordinated control strategies for key freshwater invasive species, especially signal crayfish, Australian swamp stonecrop, Chinese mitten crab, Japanese knotweed and topmouth gudgeon.
L5	Lakes (all types)	Produce and disseminate an inventory of BAP Priority Lakes for Wales
L25	Mesotrophic lakes	Ensure that appropriate low nutrient land management is in place for key mesotrophic lakes: Llanbwhllyn, Llynheilyn, Llyn Llygeirian, Talley Lakes.
L26	Mesotrophic lakes and eutrophic standing waters	For lowland BAP Priority lakes with catchment areas of more than 300ha (13 sites including Llyn Tegid, Llangorse Lake and Llyn Padarn), produce and implement catchment management plans to restore / maintain favourable condition
L28	Mesotrophic or eutrophic lakes	Carry out scoping study to identify (5) new sites for lake habitat creation in Wales
L30	Oligotrophic and dystrophic lakes	Remove and / or ensure no replanting of coniferous forestry from the catchment of all BAP Priority oligotrophic and dystrophic lakes, and restore wetlands by ditch blocking
R1	Rivers	Produce and disseminate an inventory of BAP Priority Rivers for Wales
R10	Rivers	Continue with implementation of the river SAC and SSSI monitoring programme
R12	All freshwaters	Develop and implement training package for Glastir project officers to ensure successful application of targeted catchment management and river restoration measures
P7	Ponds	Develop / support projects for Flagship pond guardians/wardens
P10	Ponds	Develop/agree a pond potential assessment framework for selected priority species.

Annexe 1. Actions that have been completed

Action No	Ecosystem	Description
L4	Lakes (all types)	Complete and maintain the uklakes.net lake inventory
L8	Lakes (all types)	Glastir entry level: ensure appropriate agrienvironment prescriptions for lake conservation.
L13	Lakes (all types)	Glastir high level: identify priority areas for targeting
P8	Ponds	Create and disseminate a definitive list of Pond Dependant BAP species in Wales
P18	Ponds	Pond creation and guidance on location and design to be included in Glastir higher level schemes.
R3	Rivers	Ensure that Glastir rivers prescriptions are compatible with the needs of the majority of freshwater species and that any conflicts are either avoided or flagged up in the guidance.
R4	Rivers	Glastir entry level: ensure appropriate agrienvironment prescriptions for river conservation.
R5	Rivers	Glastir high level: develop appropriate prescriptions
R6	Rivers	Glastir high level: identify priority areas for targeting

Annexe 2. Actions that are in progress

Action No	Ecosystem	Description
F5	All freshwaters	All LBAP partners to ensure that relevant freshwater survey information that they collect or whose information they sponsor is made widely and freely available in an easily digestible form; this should include CCW and EAW monitoring data; LBAP surveys; Countryside Survey, EIAs etc. This should include submission to LRCs but species records must not be separated from environmental information or each other.
F7	All freshwaters	Maintain the acid waters monitoring network sites in Wales, and integrate these with other high resolution EAW and ECN sites to create a Wales Freshwater Surveillance Network
L1	Eutrophic standing waters	Develop Bosherton Lake LIFE Bid
L2	Eutrophic standing waters	Ensure that the needs of standing waters are met in the Anglesey Fens LIFE project
L6	Lakes (all types)	Produce and disseminate electronic bathymetric maps and data for all lakes surveyed to 2009
L9	Lakes (all types)	Produce advisory / guidance literature on management of lakes
L10	Lakes (all types)	Survey vegetation and water quality of at least 5 previously unsurveyed lakes per year between 2009 and 2015
L11	Lakes (all types)	Monitor all lake SAC and SSSI features to detect Wales level trends, report on condition and advise on restoration measures where necessary
L12	Lakes (all types)	Glastir high level: develop appropriate prescriptions
L19	Lakes (all types)	Ensure all lakes with regulated water levels have a management regime in place that maximises their biodiversity value
L24	Lakes (all types)	Implement management measures to bring all lake features into favourable or recovering condition by 2015
P4	Ponds	Collect survey and monitoring data to assess the condition of priority ponds. Share data with LRCs.
P5	Ponds	Collect survey and monitoring data via Countryside Survey to assess the general condition of ponds in the landscape.
P9	Ponds	Identify how to create / restore ponds for pond-associated BAP species.
P14	Ponds	Create at least 150 new ponds aimed to benefit pond associated BAP species with Pond Conservations and Biffawards pond digging fund by December 2011.

P15	Ponds	Create a further 850 new high quality ponds with the Million Ponds project partners by April 2012.
R14	Rivers	Afon Irfon Life Project
R16	Rivers	Support the work of the Pearl Mussel Recovery Group and give priority to river restoration actions that benefit this endangered species
R18	Rivers	Improve migratory salmonid access to 463km of Welsh rivers by addressing fish pass issues under the Salmon for Tomorrow programme
R19	Rivers	Carry out targeted restoration of 50km of riverine corridor for BAP species' benefit
R20	Rivers	Implement management measures to bring all river features into favourable or recovering condition by 2015