

**3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting**  
**Wales Biodiversity Policy Group**  
**September 23<sup>rd</sup> 2007 11am to 3.30pm**  
**Aberystwyth**  
*Please bring sandwiches for lunch*

**Chair Diana Reynolds Welsh Assembly Government**  
**Secretariat Julia Korn Wales Biodiversity Partnership**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Information</b>	<b>lead</b>
11:00	Introductions		Diana Reynolds
11:05	Ecosystems: Principles and terminology/	Review the MEA diagram etc and agree meanings	Diana Reynolds
12:00	Key Policy Drivers	Major hooks for delivering Biodiversity in Wales	Keith Davies
12:30	Linking to Spatial Plan process	Progress with Network Environment Region and links to BAP	
13:00	Lunch		
13:30	International and European Biodiversity	Information on International and EU context to Biodiversity work. Welsh involvement post Joanna's retirement	Joanna Robertson
13:45	Ecosystem Group Policy Issues templates	Identify priority actions for Policy group	Julia Korn
14:45	Check list update	Revisiting/updating existing checklists (available on the WBP website) including the Section 42 Guidance for Planners	ALL
15:00	Minutes and actions of previous meeting		Julia Korn
15:15	AoB		Diana Reynolds
15:25	Date/venue of next 2 meetings		Julia Korn

**Wales Biodiversity Policy Group**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting September 23<sup>rd</sup> 2009**  
**11am to 3. 30pm**  
**Conference Room**  
**Ladywell House**  
**Newtown**

**Present**

Steve Spode Welsh Assembly Government (Chair)  
Diana Reynolds Welsh Assembly Government  
Stephen Bladwell Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)  
Julia Korn Wales Biodiversity Partnership (Secretariat)  
Jan Sherry Countryside Council for Wales (CCW)  
Nick Birula Environment Agency Wales (EAW)  
Keith Davies CCW  
Craig Mitchell Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA)  
Annie Smith Wales Environment Link – Marine (WEL)  
Joanna Robertson CCW

**Apologies**

Howard Davies Wildlife Trust Wales  
Hannah Pitt – National Trust  
Emyr Williams – National Parks  
Aethne Cooke CCW  
Lyndsey Dodd WWF  
Glenda Thomas Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG)  
Charles Morgan PONT  
Shaun Russell University of Wales  
Chris Tucker Forestry Commission (FC)  
Steve Lucas Bat Conservation Trust (BCT)  
Lizzie Wilberforce Wildlife Trust Wales

**1. Key Policy Drivers for Biodiversity Keith Davies**

*(The powerpoint will be circulated with the minutes)*

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005) developed evidence and a framework for integrating the environment with the wider social and economic agendas.

Defra are now leading on the development of a National Ecosystem Assessment for the UK

2009/10 – Collating evidence

2010/11 – Using evidence to develop policy scenario advice

Evidence is important but must not over complicate messages and should be aware that our interest takes place within a social/economic context.

Wales is a special place environmentally but has varied social and economic problems referred to in the power point e.g. 22.7% of the population are suffering long term illness. The health/social budget for Wales is about 35% of the money received from the UK Government. The spend per head on environmental protection is low yet the contribution the environment makes to the economy is high with 1 in 6 jobs related to the environment/environment industry. We need to get better at communicating this to the decision makers.

Traditionally a sector approach is taken to different agendas and even within the environment sectors. The main drivers affecting the environment are also identified by sector. We need to address these issues in an integrated way and we can use the policy framework in Wales to do this. The over arching policy driver is the Sustainable Development Scheme (SDS) – ‘One Wales One Planet’ of which the Wales Environment Strategy is a key part. The Government Strategy (currently ‘One Wales’) identifies priorities for the current political term and is underpinned by the SDS. The Wales Spatial Plan has been developed to enable integrated service delivery and there are opportunities to embed an approach based on the ecosystem approach (see South East Wales Networked Environment Region as a potential model for all areas).

The presentation defined the ecosystem approach and set out information on the goods and services ecosystems provide which will be incorporated into the WBP Statement on the ecosystem approach.

In order to deliver on the ecosystem approach a useful diagram was presented which flips the normal paradigm on its head so that green infrastructure replaces grey capital as the starting point (see powerpoint for diagram). Such an approach enables an assessment to be made of the environmental capacity to accommodate change and develop grey infrastructure that respects this capacity. Evidence presented in a way that can inform the planning process is crucial to inform this process and CCW is working on doing this including producing core information e.g. on soil (WAG/CCW/FCW Project on the soil resource of Wales), developing remote sensing, connectivity, landscape character and the marine HABMAP work.

Emerging ideas are being tested e.g. the Cambrian Mountains initiative is publicly testing the ecosystem approach and application of some of these concepts. The South East Wales Networked Environment region is developing a model that can embed emerging ideas and concepts into the spatial plan process. CCW has a Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) Key Target for 2009/10 to work with others to role out this concept to other spatial plan areas in Wales and make links to Glastir.

Emerging hooks include the Climate Change Strategy, CAP Health Check, the Green Job Strategy, the Marine Bill and Local Service Boards, but we need the evidence presented in an appropriate way and clear arguments and messages so that we can take forward the priorities of this group. Messages include – the environment is a national resource; integration is key; green infrastructure as the starting point for planning; need to work within environmental capacity; need to work with key stakeholders and need to develop ways to deliver a long term perspective when faced with short term political challenges.

The discussion focused around the need to link opportunities to real life situations of people in communities, this should prepare the ground for delivering messages on environmental capacity. We need to link our agenda back to the Wales SDS and help people recognise their dependency on the environment – social and economic sustainability stand on this.

## **2. Network Environment Region (NER)**

A partnership led by the Wales Spatial Plan team and including the WAG dept of Economy and Transport, CCW, EAW and WEL was set up to persuade spatial planners that under the SDS environmental infrastructure must be considered within the spatial planning context. This enables the application of the ecosystem approach and promotes connectivity. Consultants were employed to produce a framework for a network environment region in South East Wales which was based on existing evidence.

The Core Spatial Plan group liked the approach and are interested in the idea as a win/win solution. Concerns were raised that the biodiversity was over emphasised probably because people continue to see biodiversity as a constraint to development rather than part of the solution.

The Policy group discussed on the importance of biodiversity as under pinning the ecosystem approach and ensuring the resilience of ecosystems. We don't know at what point a removing a species will lead to possible catastrophic locally or further a field. Systems need to be designed to take account of this unknown (the precautionary principle?) and the evidence we do have must be presented in such a way that it is easily accessible and useable by decision makers helping them to understand and support opportunities for biodiversity

The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) (<http://www.teebweb.org/>) provides macro information that can support local action when coupled with local information and expertise.

Important to get biodiversity expertise involved at the beginning to help take account of the natural capital and then developing a systems approach that demonstrates biodiversity as part of the solution which should lead to smarter decisions..

The NER project will be rolled out over the next 6 – 9 months. This may be too late for some big development projects currently being progressed in other parts of Wales, A Minister announcement on NER would be useful as soon as possible. A paper is going to the Spatial Planning Ministerial group on Oct 1<sup>st</sup> which will seek agreement to carry on. A submission to Cabinet would then be useful as this would result in a decision paper that local people could use to influence local decision making.

The contacts in CCW and EAW are Dr Carole Newberry and John Hogg respectively.

## **3. Ecosystems Principles and terminology**

The group agreed to write a WBP Statement on the Ecosystem Approach.

To include

- Definition of biodiversity (from the Wales Biodiversity Framework), the Ecosystem Approach (from KD powerpoint), Ecosystems and Ecosystems goods and services (from DR)
- Pyramid diagram from KD powerpoint
- Intrinsic value of biodiversity
- Minister's quote on MEA (from DR)
- Biodiversity as foundation of ecosystems (MEA)
- Paragraph on systems and processes – necessary for valuation (from SB)
- JNCC information (from JR)
- 12 principles (from DR)
- List of target audiences

Discussion followed on the difficulties of influencing local decision making and need to help local decision makers recognise accumulative impacts of local small scale decisions. It is important to get systems right in local authorities to get better decision making. Information produced needs to be fully embedded in Planning Policy Wales (PPW).

Currently the Wales programme for improvement review is looking at the performance framework that drives decision making. The outcome of this could help or hinder progress. The Minister is clear that she does not currently support a PI for Biodiversity, all other avenues for improving local authority performance on biodiversity must be tried first as these are more meaningful in the long term.. Local Risk registers: it is difficult to get issues such as Climate change adaptation onto risk registers as to do this it is necessary to identify the probability of an event in a local area.

The Policy Group Statement on the Ecosystem Approach must be embedded within the planning process of different sectors through WAG and regional strategies. WAG have already announced that SD is the central organising principle for all decisions and the ecosystem approach statement must link to this.

#### **4. Checklist update**

Checklists are produced for public sector and government to help them implement their biodiversity duty. All published checklists have been endorsed by WLGA, WAG and WBP (web link).

New checklists are currently being produced for Community Councils (DR), Big multiple consent projects (Jennifer Dack (EAW), Scientists/civil servants (DR), the Fire Service (JS), Pesticides (William Somerfield (WAG) and the MOD (CM). The Scientists/Civil servants checklist will lead to an academic being assigned to each ESG and the Species Expert Group (SEG).

Checklists may be produced for Farming Connect and for grass verges as discussed.

#### **5. Ecosystem Group Policy issues**

At each Policy Group meeting time will be allocated for discussion of priority policy issues arising from the ESGs and the SEG. If urgent issues arise between meetings this should be sent to JK and she will circulate to the policy group and

agree via e-mail the best way forward. JK will report back to the Chair and outline required action.

### **Policy group work programme**

A work programme will be developed to broadly set out all action required by the policy group. In addition the ESG/SEG Policy issues templates will be amended to enable individual actions to be tracked.

### **Reviewing Policy Issues**

ESG/SEG issues will be reviewed at a Policy group meeting every 9 months. It will be the responsibility of the Chair to update the template and send to JK before the meeting.

### **Upland ESG issues/Lowland grassland and heathland ESG issues**

The importance of influencing the developing Glastir scheme was discussed including the need for clear and adequate timescales for consultations. A mechanism has been set up to enable Wales ESG/SEG groups to be consulted directly by WAG on policy development. It is important that Chairs circulate consultations within their group and include clear information on the need to respond through the Chair within the time frame to ensure a single agreed response from each group. Some groups are doing this effectively already.

The need to develop an open habitats policy from coniferous forest sites was an issue for upland and lowland grassland and heathland groups and requires the policy group to work with the FCW. FCW have a computer model (developed by Forest research) and this could be used to inform this any open habitats policy. FCW were not able to make this meeting and so this needs to be carried forward.

The need to reform Strategic Search Area guidance for wind farm development to include a presumption against development on peat will be picked up by DR. A review of SSAs is coming up and this could possibly be included then with strong steer provided within Technical Advice Note (TAN) 8. The importance of being proactive with development was raised especially with regards to wind farm development and the need to look at proactive solutions such as the RSPB pilot project at Clocaenog.

Funding was discussed and DR announced that the Assembly had a pot of money to use on habitat projects this financial year - possibly amounting to one £5,000 to £8,000 project for each ESG. This would be a precursor to a future biodiversity fund being developed through a partnership led by CCW. While this funding was welcomed the issue of long term funding to ensure appropriate management was raised and this is something the Policy group/WBP need to explore further.

Developing a register of Environmental Impact Assessments and tightening up on their implementation needs to be discussed in the Assembly.

### **Urban**

Raising awareness of the new 'Open Mosaic Habitats on previously develop land' priority habitat is urgent within the planning community at all levels. Training for Planners on TAN 5 is being organised by WAG and this would be a good

opportunity to raise this. The Urban group should look at the guidance produced by Buglife.

DR had to leave the meeting early and before going agreed to go through the Upland, Urban and Lowland grassland and heathland issues and identify any additional action that she can take and feed back to JK

Via e-mail following the meeting DR agreed that a letter of clarification regarding the existence and status of, and steps required under the NERC Act Biodiversity Duty for the Open Mosaic habitat was required and asked that Peter Frost draft this letter.

## **5. International and European Biodiversity – Joanna Robertson**

*(The power point will be circulated with the minutes).*

Involvement in Biodiversity beyond our boundaries is not just extremely useful but also very inspiring. The powerpoint gives information on leading EU, Pan European and global organisations, groups, conventions and legislation which supports and guides our work. She mentioned the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and the UK response ‘Plant Diversity Challenge’ as a good hook for lower plant conservation,

At a UK level the JNCC is looking at global biodiversity mechanisms and flagging up the need to work more collaboratively across common and linked issues. The JNCC website is excellent and their papers are comprehensive and include information from the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) Convention of the Parties (COP) The UK Nature and Landscape Office (UKNLO) employ a person in Brussels who attends European Briefings.

Policy group members recognised the benefits of involvement in the European and Pan European agenda and the need to establish a 2 way flow of information. A starting point would be to link the group to the John Peredur in WAG who carries out 6 month horizon scanning to stimulate and facilitate feedback in Wales – this needs to be fed to this group.

CCW had an officer who does WAG, UK and EU briefings who could also provide a useful link.

## **6. Minutes and actions of Meeting May 5<sup>th</sup> 2009**

The minutes were confirmed

**Actions 1 2<sup>nd</sup> part of 2, 4, 8, 9, 15, 17 Carried forward**

**Actions 5, 6, 10 in progress**

### **Action**

**JK to update and translate actions and minutes from May 5<sup>th</sup> and post on WBP website by end of October**

### **Date of next 4 meetings**

December 8<sup>th</sup> Newtown

March 16 2010 venue tbc

June 15 2010 venue tbc

Sept 21 2010 venue tbc

**Action**

**JK to invite Katie Jo Luxton (RSPB to the next meeting to discuss beyond the 2010 target**

**JK and Delcie Simkin (WAG) to organise the next meetings**

**Draft V2 Oct 2009**

Actions and outcomes from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Policy Biodiversity Group Meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> Sept 2009

No	Who/Action	Outcome	Progress
<b>Minutes and actions of last meeting</b>			
1 Carry forward Action 1	JK to invite Stella Owen (agricultural Policy Advisor) from the NFU to join the Policy Group	Farming interests represented on the Biodiversity Policy group	Carry forward
2 Carry forward Action 2	<b>Action 4 The Policy Group will use expertise from the WAG Ecosystem Group and the Future of BAP Task and Finish Group and the Diagram for Millennium Ecosystem Assessment is a good starting point to agree a definition of Ecosystem Goods and Services. Action .5. Then: The Policy group will ask each of the BAP Ecosystem Groups to look at which Ecosystem Goods and Services are relevant to them, and include this in their Terms of Reference.</b>	<b>Achieve a common understanding and use of Ecosystem Goods and Services</b>	<b>JK Working on a Policy Group Statement on the Ecosystem Approach</b>  Carry forward
3 Carry forward Action 4	DR to run a workshop at the next meeting on policy development and business processes of partner organisations and groups	Increased understanding of opportunities and organisations and groups.	Carried forward to 4 <sup>th</sup> meeting
4 Carry forward Action 8	<b>CT to find out more about the open habitat creation computer model being developed by the Forestry Commission and circulate information to the group</b>	<b>Use of computer model to aid discussion and policy development for developing open habitat on woodland sites</b>	<b>Carry forward</b>
5 Carry forward Action 9	Policy group to identify how to feed into the development of the Cambrian Mountains Ecosystem project. The next phase will involve identifying a catchment for the pilot and developing a 50 year scenario to inform the development of actions.	Biodiversity outcomes embedded into the development of the Cambrian Mountains Ecosystem project	Carry forward
6 Carry forward	<b>JK to develop a 'BARS friendly' Action Plan to be used to develop the work programme of the Policy group</b>	<b>Ability to transfer actions straight onto BARS by those who Lead on actions and so supporting full use of BARS within the</b>	<b>Carry Forward</b>

<b>Action15</b>		<b>BAP process</b>	
7 Carry forward Action 17	AC to set up a sub group to produce the Section 42 guidance and ensure all appropriate links, reporting requirements etc are included	Comprehensive Section 42 Guidance available for key audiences in an easily understandable format that properly informs processes and procedures to benefit biodiversity.	Carry Forward
<b>Actions in progress</b>			
8 Previously Action 5	<b>DR, HA, JS, GT and CM to update on checklists at the next meeting</b>	<b>Increased number of government departments and public bodies have guidance on how to deliver the Biodiversity Duty</b>	<b>In progress</b>
9 Previously Action 6	Training issues need to be dealt with by WBP. JK to discuss this with Juliet Hynes	Appropriate actions developed to ensure that issues to do with professional development and skills gaps are properly addressed in Wales	In progress
10 Previously Action 10	<b>HGs to explore if the Environmental Hub can develop a project that can pool the evidence on ecosystem services providing a base to inform large scale upland projects and enable the best outcome for biodiversity and service delivery.</b>	<b>Biodiversity outcomes embedded into future large scale Upland projects with aim of rolling out to other Ecosystems.</b>	<b>Hub contracted to pull together the synthesis chapter of the UK Millennium Assessment</b>
<b>Key Policy Drivers for Biodiversity</b>			
11	KD to circulate the power point	Information action	Done
12	<b>KD to circulate CCW Council Paper on Green Infrastructure (July 2009)</b>	<b>Information action</b>	<b>Done</b>
<b>Network Environment Region (NER)</b>			
13	SS to look into getting a submission to Cabinet and report back to this group.		
<b>Ecosystems Principles and terminology</b>			
14	All to send JK the information above by Friday 2 <sup>nd</sup> Oct	Development of Ecosystem statement	

		<b>leading to common understanding of terminology and principles</b>	
15	JK to write statement and circulate for agreement by Oct 23 <sup>rd</sup>	As above	
<b>16</b>	<b>JK to prepare final statement in time next Policy Group meeting on Dec 8<sup>th</sup> 2009</b>	<b>agreement on above</b>	
17	Policy group rep to take to WBP in February 2010 for final approval	Broader agreement / endorsement of above	
<b>18</b>	<b>DR to seek ministerial approval and CM to seek WLGA approval.</b>	<b>As above</b>	
19	DR/CM to discuss how to work out the probability of CC events happening in a local areas		
<b>20</b>	<b>CM to identify where/how the statement needs to be embedded to have most effect</b>	<b>Ensure full use of Ecosystem Statement</b>	
21	DR to work with colleagues to ensure this happens	As above	
<b>Checklist update</b>			
<b>22</b>	<b>All to send drafts to JK</b>		
23	JK to circulate to Policy group for comment		
<b>24</b>	<b>Policy group rep to take to WBP in Feb/July for endorsement</b>		
25	DR to arrange for WLGA/WAG to endorse and send to Sean McHugh for publishing on WBP website.	All above to expand check lists to cover a greater number of service delivery areas and improve support for delivery of NERC	
<b>26</b>	<b>JK to ask Powys for copy of their verges guidance and bring this back to a future meeting</b>	<b>development of a checklist for grass verges</b>	
<b>Ecosystem Group Policy issues</b>			
27	JK will develop a Policy group work programme based on actions agreed at each meeting. In time this work programme will be published on BARS.	Common understanding of work priorities and greater communication of the work of this group	
<b>28</b>	<b>JK will add an action Lead column and a</b>	<b>Wales BAP group Chairs and members</b>	

	<b>progress/expected outcome column to the Policy issues template so that progress can be easily tracked for each ESG/SEG.</b>	<b>able to track progress on action to address their priority issues</b>	
29	NB to send JR and JK their form E which has been adapted to make it BARS compatible.	Information action	
<b>30</b>	<b>JK to discuss putting the policy group work programme on BARS by December 8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Information action</b>	
31	JK to send an e-mail to BAP group Chairs explaining how their issues will be dealt with by the Policy group (by Oct 23 <sup>rd</sup> ).	Chairs better understand what how their priority policy issues will be actioned by the policy group	
<b>32</b>	<b>JK to circulate dates of the next 4 Policy Group meetings to all ESG/SEG group Chairs</b>	<b>Information action</b>	
33	All ESG/SEG group Chairs to update their Policy issues template and send to JK 8 months from when there issues were last discussed.	Policy actions reviewed against priority issues regularly	
<b>34</b>	<b>DR to ensure that Kevin Austin(WAG Technical Services Division) circulates the consultation on Glastir (Higher level) early leaving ESGs, SEG and others enough time to prepare information and reach agreement on their response.</b>	<b>Biodiversity considerations properly embedded in Glastir</b>	
35	DR to ask Kevin Austin to send Glastir updates every fortnight to ESG/SEG group Chairs as it is difficult to keep up with the rapid pace of change within the scheme.	Ecosystem and Species Expert groups up to date with the development of Glastir	
<b>36</b>	<b>DR to talk to Andrew Chambers. (WAG) to ensure the consultation on common land and Galtir is circulated to the Wales ESG/SEG groups</b>	<b>Ecosystem and Species Expert group properly involved in this and future consultations from the WAG</b>	
37	All ESG/SEG group Chairs to issue clear instructions to their members on how the groups approach to consultation exercises.	A clear and manageable approach that people understand when consulting on WAG policies etc – better/ more coordinated advice on biodiversity issues	
<b>38</b>	<b>JS to send DR information on the computer model</b>	<b>Information action</b>	

	<b>developed by Forest Research some years ago.</b>		
39	DR to discuss EIA register and regulation with Ian Rugg in the Assembly.		
<b>40</b>	<b>DR to discuss with Rosemary Thomas in the Assembly and Pete Frost (Urban group Chair) as to how to raise awareness of the new Urban priority habitat and what this means for planners at the WAG TAN 5 training events.</b>	<b>Improved understanding and awareness of the new Urban priority habitat</b>	
41	JS to forward to SS/JK the draft definition of the new Urban habitat.	Information action	
<b>42</b>	<b>SB to send JK the Buglife contact on the SEG</b>	<b>Information action</b>	
43	JK to send link to Buglife guidance to Pete Frost	Information action	
<b>44</b>	<b>DR to identify action she can take in relation to the ESG issues presented and to ensure appropriate colleagues contact the relevant ESG Chair</b>	<b>Dialogue established between relevant ESG and the appropriate Department in the Assembly to address specific issues</b>	
45	JK to include action required under general headings in the work programme and ensure responsibility is assigned to a named representative.	Policy Group action delivered	
<b>46</b>	<b>DR to work with Claire Burgess (WAG planning) and Peter Frost (Chair of Urban Group) to write a letter to raise awareness of the Open Mosaic habitat, it's status and action required to ensure compliance with the NERC Act Biodiversity Duty for planners by Oct 12<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Improved understanding and awareness and delivery of the new Urban priority habitat</b>	
<b>International and European Biodiversity</b>			
47	CM to contact John Peredur in WAG and ask him if he can send the horizon scanning information to JK for circulation to the group every 6 months.	Information action	Done
<b>48</b>	<b>Policy group representative to agree to keep an eye on what is happening with JNCC and also IUCN</b>	<b>Policy group up to date on relevant issues/developments beyond the Welsh boundary.</b>	
49	DR to forge stronger links across DEFRA including their EU and Pan European work and feedback to the group	As above	
<b>50</b>	<b>JK to put further action on linking to UK/European</b>	<b>Agreement of how and through who Wales</b>	

	and pan European on the Agenda of the next meeting ( <i>may link to 2010 target talk</i> )	will contribute to the agenda beyond its boundaries	
<b>Date of next 4 Meetings</b>			
51	<p>JK to make necessary arrangements for future meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>December 8<sup>th</sup> Newtown</b> (Policy Issues from Enclosed Farmland, Marine, Wetland groups and SEG)</li> <li>• <b>March 16 2010 venue tbc</b> (Policy Issues from Freshwater, Woodland and Coastal groups)</li> <li>• <b>June 15 2010 venue tbc</b> (Policy issues reviewed from Upland, Lowland Grassland and Heathland and Urban groups)</li> <li>• <b>Sept 21 2010 venue tbc</b> (Policy issues reviewed from Enclosed Farmland, Marine, Wetland groups and SEG)</li> </ul>		On-going December 8 <sup>th</sup> venue is WAG Boardroom, Ladywell House in Newtown