

The Delivery of UK Biodiversity Priority Habitats and Species Actions in Wales

BACKGROUND

Published in 1994, the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) set out the UK's legal commitment to Article 6A of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The UK BAP brought together existing work and expertise on biodiversity to set out a partnership approach. Although the focus for delivery was on agreed actions and targets for priority species and habitats, the UK BAP went much further by setting out how the conservation community should engage with other sectors and bring in new partners in order to meet the objectives of the CBD. An important component of the UK BAP was the establishment of a network of Local Biodiversity Action Plan Partnerships to deliver action and to engage with communities, raise awareness and support education initiatives.

Devolution in 1997 and the resulting development of country strategies for delivery of biodiversity led the UK Government and the UK Biodiversity Partnership to revisit the UK BAP in 2007. This led to the publication of *Conserving Biodiversity – The UK Approach* which reaffirmed the general approach set out in the UK BAP but suggested that structures and processes for delivery should be organised at a country level. A country approach would be able to build on the success of the UK BAP, while addressing some of the weaknesses such as: poor communication between those working at a UK and a local level; a lack of policy integration; and little integration with existing delivery mechanisms such as protected sites, organisation work programmes and agri-environment schemes.

SUMMARY

Building on the success of the existing structure in Wales, the new approach to BAP delivery introduces a new layer of Welsh groups that will pool expertise and close the gap between those who deliver action in Wales and those who are able to provide strategic advice, guidance and support. The new groups are nine Ecosystem Groups, a Species Expert Group and a Wales Biodiversity Policy Group. The elements that are being maintained and developed are the Wales Biodiversity Partnership (WBP) and Support Team, the WBP Permanent and Task and Finish Groups (as WBP Support Groups), the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) Partnerships and Local Record Centres (LRCs).

In order to ensure effective delivery of BAP in Wales, the WBP Steering Group, chaired by the Welsh Assembly Government, will have overall responsibility for ensuring that Wales delivers BAP and will hold others accountable for delivering and reporting on their commitments. WBP will also continue to provide support, advice and guidance, and encourage other sectors to develop practices that embrace biodiversity protection and enhancement.

The Wales approach recognises the need to plan strategically and to bring in new partners in order to respond to pressures such as climate change and non-native species. It fully incorporates the role of the ecosystem approach and integrated landscape and larger sea-scale projects in contributing to biodiversity targets. Partnership working will drive success not just between members of the individual groups but also between groups working at a Wales level and those operating at different geographical levels, especially the LBAP partnerships. The Wales groups will set targets and identify actions at a Wales level, and from this will support the development of targets and actions at the most appropriate geographic scale – in most

cases at the local level. LBAP partnerships are seen as critical if we are to deliver on the ambitious target of halting and eventually reversing biodiversity loss in Wales.

It is vital to monitor and report on the success of the new approach if we are to achieve long term benefits for biodiversity. Using the UK Biodiversity Action Reporting system (BARS) will underpin the approach, enabling communication on actions partners are taking and reporting the contribution they are making. Groups will be expected to report regularly to WBP to ensure that progress is being made and identified barriers are addressed. The whole approach will be reviewed following the next UK reporting round.

1. INTRODUCTION

The new UK Strategic Biodiversity Framework¹ sets out a shared vision and approach to conserving biodiversity within our devolved structure. The emphasis for future UK-level work will be: achieving effective communication; providing guidance; standard setting; research; and reporting at the UK level. Work to embed biodiversity into policies and programmes, set targets, plan and prioritise action, and implement delivery mechanisms for priority species and habitats will be carried out at the country, regional and local levels. For marine biodiversity, elements of this work will also need to be undertaken jointly with other countries and at the UK level.

The Ecosystem Approach is identified as a key underlying principle for the conservation of biodiversity at a UK level using the Convention on Biological Diversity definition “*a strategy for the integrated management of land, air, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way, and which recognises that people with their cultural and varied social needs are an integral part of ecosystems*”. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA), published in 2005, highlighted the link between ecosystems and human well-being, with biodiversity being the foundation of ecosystems and therefore fundamentally important for well-being. One of the key messages from the MEA is that “*Biodiversity benefits people through more than just its contribution to material welfare and livelihoods. Biodiversity contributes to security, resilience, social relations, health, and freedom of choices and actions.*”² **Appendix 5** is a copy of the MEA diagram demonstrating the link between ecosystems and human well being.

The Wales approach recognises the value of functioning ecosystems and the need to protect and enhance combinations of habitats that can deliver ecosystem goods and services that will benefit biodiversity. This approach is a combination of:

- protecting the best wildlife sites and surrounding areas;
- halting biodiversity loss and promoting the recovery of priority species and habitats;
- embedding biodiversity in relevant sectors of policy and decision-making;
- enthusing people;
- developing the evidence base.

In Wales we aim to build on the strengths of the UK BAP process and address some of its weaknesses, in particular by improving the integration of habitat and species-based work,

¹ UK Biodiversity Partnership Standing Committee (2007). *Conserving Biodiversity – The UK Approach*. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

² *Millennium Ecosystem Assessment* (2005)

strengthening support for national and local levels of delivery and developing the ecosystem approach. This approach encompasses the needs of all species and habitats listed for Section 42 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, addressing their conservation through ecosystem approach principles.

WBP are the lead body for the implementation of the Biodiversity elements of the Wales Environment Strategy in line with the priorities, principle roles and responsibilities set out in the Wales Biodiversity Framework. The Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) and WBP will hold partner organisations accountable for their agreed contributions and, where appropriate, their biodiversity obligations defined by statute or policy. The aim is, however, to develop a delivery mechanism that is owned by a broad partnership, with all members equally committed to its success. WAG and WBP will keep the delivery mechanism under review, so that it can evolve to take account of experience and respond to obstacles to delivery and new opportunities.

2. WHY WE NEED A NEW DELIVERY MECHANISM

Devolution is an important driver behind the development of a new delivery mechanism to support biodiversity delivery in Wales. Most policies, legislative changes and major funding streams are now at country level and so it is appropriate for a shift in coordination and prioritisation to reflect this. WAG will now undertake the consenting of certain developments and activities in the marine environment which would previously have been consented by DEFRA.

Devolution is not, however, the most important factor. Climate change presents us with new and urgent challenges that require us to make a step-change in our approach to biodiversity conservation. **Alongside protected sites and species actions, we need to address ecosystem functioning to ensure continued provision of services.** Halting (and ultimately reversing) biodiversity loss requires us to adopt integrated landscape and larger sea-scale approaches that restore whole ecosystems. This will be an exciting and challenging process, requiring strong partnerships if we are to succeed.

3. AIMS OF THE DELIVERY MECHANISM

Aim: To halt and ultimately reverse the loss of biodiversity in Wales

In order to achieve this we will:

- (i) Secure the adoption of an integrated ecosystem approach
- (ii) Embed climate change adaptation principles in conservation action and ensure that the mitigation impacts of conservation management are considered.³
- (iii) Achieve biodiversity enhancements across whole landscapes and larger sea-scale.
- (iv) Achieve priority habitat and species targets through greater collective emphasis on restoration of relict habitats and expansion, in addition to protecting the remaining resource. Priority habitats and species covered by Annex I and Annex II of the Habitats Directive targets should be linked with Favourable Conservation Status (Appendix 6)

³ UK Biodiversity Partnership (2007). *Conserving Biodiversity in a changing climate: guidance on building capacity to adapt*. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

- (v) Enhance the recovery of priority species by better integrating their needs into habitat-based work where possible, and through targeted species recovery work where necessary.
- (vi) Support the conservation and restoration of designated sites, including by enhancing the wider environment in which they sit.
- (vii) Support the conservation of marine ecosystems, within and beyond designated sites.
- (viii) Establish and implement a delivery programme, with agreed accountabilities, for priority species and habitats in Wales.
- (ix) Improve the integration of UK, national and local levels of delivery.
- (x) Secure links between relevant policy-makers and biodiversity practitioners to ensure biodiversity issues are fully considered at the earliest stage of decision-making.
- (xi) Strengthen biodiversity partnerships by clarifying roles at Wales and local levels.
- (xii) Increase levels of public understanding and enjoyment of biodiversity through increased opportunities for getting involved in conservation .
- (xiii) Improve data-sharing partnerships that enable comprehensive and robust biological data and action/target information to be accessed as vital evidence to support decision-making processes, and future biodiversity action planning (e.g. utilising BARS, LRCs, the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) and the Marine Environmental Data and Information Network (MEDIN)).

4. OVERVIEW AND STRUCTURE OF THE DELIVERY MECHANISM

In addition to a greater co-ordination of effort in Wales, the biggest change that the new delivery mechanism will bring is greater emphasis on identifying and carrying out the actions that are most urgent and have the greatest benefit for biodiversity. Consequently there will be much less emphasis on producing long habitat or species-specific action plans. The original 436 UK HAPs and SAPs contained over 6,300 published actions, and more than 38,000 additional actions are published in LBAPs across the UK. What this process did not do was to identify which of these actions matter most for biodiversity conservation and ensure that they are carried out. The new delivery mechanism will be action- and outcome-focussed, therefore enabling the development of clear delivery and policy priorities, at different geographical scales, and with assigned accountabilities.

The proposed delivery mechanism has six main components described briefly below.

(I) Wales Biodiversity Policy Group

This group brings together all the policy actions from the Wales Ecosystem Groups and the Wales Species Expert Group. The Wales Biodiversity Policy Group will be composed of representatives from the policy sector in Wales from both within and outside the biodiversity field. Focussing all the policy effort through one group will help to overcome one of the main constraints to achieving biodiversity action that was identified in previous BAP reporting rounds. Policy actions from species and habitats can now be channelled into common themes, for more efficient implementation and solutions than if dealt with by each habitat or species group individually.

(II) Wales Ecosystem Groups

This comprises nine groups: Woodland; Lowland Grassland and Heathland; Wetland; Urban and Brownfield; Freshwater; Upland; Coastal; Farmland; and Marine Ecosystem Groups, and will largely be made up of experts from relevant statutory organisations, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and LBAP partnerships. These groups are charged with driving the

delivery of priority habitat targets (including those associated with relevant species), utilising ecosystem principles and appropriate geographic scales. However, the execution of tasks is likely to be at a local level through LBAPs or be within the statutory remit or capacity of group members, members of another Ecosystem Group or the Wales Biodiversity Policy Group.

(III) The Species Expert Group

This group has been formed in order to prevent the limited number of species experts in Wales and the UK from receiving multiple queries from each habitat group regarding species action. The group will consist of one or two experts from each broad taxonomic group. They will provide advice in response to queries from habitats groups in relation to habitat management requirements for particular groups or individual species. They will often be able to provide a reference to relevant documentation, help resolve conflicting requirements and develop or commission guidance where it is missing. The group will be seen as a source of information and a link to relevant UK groups and experts. For further information see **Appendix 1**. The Marine Ecosystem Group is to encompass expertise for all marine species (both habitat related and non-habitat related), in addition to habitat expertise.

(IV) Species Lead Partners

There will be a continuing need for Species Lead Partners to report status and trend information against targets. In addition, there are some important species actions that cannot be carried out through habitat-based work or policy mechanisms. These will require targeted species recovery work.

The species actions will be coordinated by Lead Partners and may be delivered through: single species groups; those based on single taxonomic groups e.g. widespread herptiles; or with mixed taxonomic interests, but common actions e.g. farmland birds and arable plants. They will carry out a range of activities including prioritising actions, setting targets at the LBAP level, co-ordinating funding and research bids and identifying and carrying out priority projects for delivery. They will also work closely with LBAP Partnerships to agree the most important areas for landscape-scale delivery for species actions. The Marine Ecosystem Group is to address the needs (targets, action and reporting etc) for all marine species (both habitat related and non-habitat related),

(V) Local Delivery

Halting biodiversity loss and meeting the challenge of climate change requires landscape and larger sea-scale approaches that improve habitat connectivity and ecosystem functions, and deliver appropriate networks to meet the present and future needs of species. This requires coordinated delivery at a local level. The Wales Ecosystem Groups and species Lead Partners will work closely with LBAP partnerships. Some LBAP partnerships may come together to deliver particular actions at a larger local scale, for example on habitat sites that straddle political borders. LBAP partnerships also have a key role in increasing and promoting the understanding of biodiversity and encouraging others to take action, through education and awareness-raising activities, and integrating biodiversity into local decision making processes. LRCs play an important role in supporting the local collection, collation and provision of information on biodiversity, raising awareness and engaging with biological recorders.

(VI) Wales Biodiversity Partnership

WBP will oversee, enable and monitor the implementation of the BAP process in Wales. It will explore and develop new opportunities for biodiversity action, identify and review

barriers, and work to remove obstacles to secure biodiversity gain, including coordinating and facilitating the ecosystem approach in Wales. WBP will work strategically to ensure that the new structure and the relevant groups within are fully engaged in shaping the necessary mechanisms to deliver biodiversity conservation, and will continue to champion biodiversity within the Welsh Assembly. WBP will work with partner organisations and groups to find new ways of working and new flows of funding required to deliver BAP and Environment Strategy Wales objectives as well as focusing existing resources on ensuring that this new structure delivers agreed biodiversity targets.

Responsibility for delivery of BAP lies with the WBP, and ultimately the Welsh Assembly Government. To ensure that the right processes and mechanisms are in place for biodiversity protection and enhancement, the Wales Biodiversity Framework will be reviewed periodically in line with UK reporting and, if required, following annual reports from the Wales Ecosystem Groups and the Species Expert Group to the WBP. WBP will identify and address weaknesses and barriers to delivery. The WBP will work closely with the Wales Biodiversity Policy Group to ensure that new opportunities for supporting biodiversity through integrated policy development and for influencing and securing major funding streams are identified and acted on. WBP will also provide the main link between Wales and the other UK Country Groups, the UK Standing Committee and associated advisory groups.

WBP Support Groups

There are a number of support groups in Wales which were operational before the development of this structure for BAP delivery in Wales. These groups have a key support role for the delivery of biodiversity targets.

(a) Wales Environmental Information Forum and Steering Group

The Wales Environmental Information Forum (WEIF) is a regular event which brings together the broad community of environmental data providers and users. It seeks to address their concerns, tackle specific issues that constrain data sharing, update them on developments in Wales and beyond, and agree the steps we need to take in Wales to help improve access to environmental data and information. The first Forum was held in March 2007 and led to the formation of the WEI Steering Group (WEISG). The Steering Group is charged with owning the actions and issues raised at the WEIF and developing a strategy and action plan to resolve and deliver them. The Group's vision is the "*Sharing of Welsh environmental information to benefit the environment and people of Wales, the UK and globally*". The group aims to include representatives from all sectors whilst remaining small enough to focus on developing and delivering a strategy and action plan. It aims to find solutions for Wales that work within a UK and global context, and has links to the work of the UK Association of Local Environmental Record Centres, the UK National Biodiversity Network and Global Biodiversity Information Facility, the UK Marine Environmental Data and Information Network, and the Association of Local Government Ecologists. [Link to Terms of Reference on WBP website](#)

(b) Wales Invasive Non-native Species Group

The Wales Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) working group began in March 2008 and is tightly tied to the INNS Framework Strategy for Great Britain and its implementation in Wales. The overarching aim of this group is to minimise the risk posed and reduce the negative impacts caused by invasive non-native species. [Link to Terms of Reference on WBP website](#)

(c) WBP Task and Finish Groups

Made up of members of the WBP Steering Group and Wider Partnership, these groups address specific issues relating to biodiversity delivery. Examples of current Task and Finish Groups are the Outcome 21 Group established to facilitate the delivery of the Wales Environment Strategy Outcome 21 on achieving favourable condition on protected sites in Wales, and the Business and Biodiversity Group which aims to create stronger links between business and biodiversity conservation. Link to Terms of Reference on WBP website

5. EXISTING UK HAP AND SAP GROUPS

For some habitats and species, UK expert groups will continue to provide an important technical, championing and advisory role beyond 2009. The UK Biodiversity Reporting and Information Group (BRIG) is currently defining what will need to happen at the UK level in the future to meet the requirements set out in the UK strategic biodiversity framework.

6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The various Wales BAP groups will be asked to provide annual updates on progress in order to identify problems with delivery. The WBP Support Team will produce an annual paper for the WBP Steering Group and action will be taken to address issues raised. More frequent reporting may be considered in the future.

The Wales Biodiversity Framework will be reviewed directly following the UK BAP Reporting Round and also as required following annual updates from the various Wales BAP groups to the WBP.

BARS will be used to monitor achievement towards Wales-level species and habitat targets. Where possible, actions will be broken down to LBAP area and fed into local disaggregated targets held by the LBAP. Progress towards these local targets will then be fed into the Wales level targets held by the Wales Ecosystem Groups and Species Expert Group. Regular updating of action progress (action goal progress) and LBAP target progress (target goal progress) on BARS will enable Wales to continually assess how it is achieving its targets and measure its contribution towards UK targets and beyond. This will enable us to focus effort where it is most needed.

7. FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have questions about this framework, or want to find out how you can get involved, please contact: Julia Korn j.korn@ccw.gov.uk, Jan Sherry j.sherry@ccw.gov.uk or Aethne Cooke (for marine issues) a.cooke@ccw.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1

Roles and Responsibilities of the different components within the Wales Biodiversity Partnership Mechanism.

(I) Wales Biodiversity Policy Group

Chaired by the Welsh Assembly Government with the Secretariat provided by the WBP Support Team.

WBP will convene this group to take forward all policy-based actions (including relevant non-devolved policy) identified by the Wales Ecosystem Groups and the Wales Species Expert Group. Many of these are similar in both form and scope and in terms of potential delivery e.g. planning policy, legislation changes, agri-environment changes etc, and are thus most efficiently managed by a central group of policy bodies.

The Biodiversity Policy Group will be expected to:

- i. assemble and integrate all relevant policy actions for Welsh priority species, habitats and ecosystem functioning
- ii. determine priority policy action
- iii. advise on the integration of biodiversity into the relevant policies of all public authorities and statutory undertakers in Wales and the UK
- iv. with the Welsh Assembly, provide clear direction and communication to all public authorities and statutory undertakers on compliance with the NERC Act Biodiversity Duty and other legislation across their functions
- v. assign responsibilities for taking identified actions forward, monitor progress using BARS, and ensure accountability
- vi. liaise with relevant Ecosystem Groups and Species Lead Partners to ensure any policy changes would result in the required biodiversity outcomes, secure access to necessary data and monitor the impact of policy changes
- vii. develop a common understanding of key concepts and terms and develop core messages for use in policy integration
- viii. use existing research to identify the costs/benefits of delivering policies that better benefit biodiversity and produce best practice, and identify future research needs in this area
- ix. act as a focal point for policy information and provide intelligence to identify and influence key drivers.

(II) Ecosystem Groups

These groups will need to be innovative and dynamic in their approach to delivery, and will need to consider the impacts of climate change as part of the decision-making process. They will each have a core membership that represents relevant habitat and species interests. When necessary, they will set up time-limited sub-groups to carry out defined tasks and bring in additional expertise. WBP has agreed the Chairs, and relevant species interest groups will be represented. It is also expected that all groups will have an LBAP representative to facilitate links to LBAP Partnerships.

In addition to marine habitats, the Marine Ecosystem Group is to encompass all marine benthic and mobile species, and supporting structures and function of the marine environment.

Group Chairs (**Appendix 4**) will be expected to be the lead in Wales for those habitats covered by each group and take responsibility for developing and maintaining a work programme or action plan. The group may agree some exceptions where the expertise and resource for driving and coordinating an aspect of habitat-based delivery lies in another agency or multiple agencies, but overall responsibility for coordinating, implementing and reporting for the group will rest with the Chair. The Chair will be supported by the Group Secretariat, which may be the same or a different organisation. The Secretariat will be responsible for organising meetings and administering the group, and other tasks as agreed with the Chair.

The Ecosystem Groups will be expected to:

- i. Drive the delivery of habitat and species targets:
 - set objectives/targets using the standard BAP target types for the habitats, and work with species experts to set targets for relevant species at the Wales and LBAP level. Targets should link to Favourable Conservation Status for Annex I habitats and Annex II, IV and V species (**Appendix 6**);
 - the marine group will review existing targets, and set targets at the most appropriate geographic level
 - prioritise the most urgent and important actions to meet the collective needs of the habitats and species within the overall group and provide coordinated guidance on these to LBAP Partnerships and others;
 - take into account the impacts of climate change and take advice from WBP who will be working with experts in the field;
 - consult with LBAP Partnerships and others to agree targets and the most appropriate delivery mechanism;
 - ensure monitoring to determine reporting on progress towards habitat and species targets;
 - identify resource requirements and coordinate bids for research or implementation;

- identify priority areas for delivering biodiversity enhancements and improving connectivity at a landscape and larger sea-scale;
 - develop and implement the ecosystem approach as set out in the WBP Framework, taking into account ecosystem services and carrying capacity;
 - engage appropriately with local partnerships to align delivery;
 - provide advice on habitat management for land managers;
 - maintain communication with other country groups and provide representation on UK groups where appropriate;
- ii. Identify policy blockages and, through representation to the Biodiversity Policy Group, help drive policy development and monitor outcomes.
 - iii. Liaise with other relevant Ecosystem Groups where joint approaches could be beneficial, either for biodiversity-related action or securing of funding.
 - iv. Identify knowledge gaps, and either address these directly or recommend to the WBP how they could be filled.
 - v. Coordinate reporting on status and trends for habitats and associated species:
 - identify a member of the group to lead on reporting
 - use BARS to report against actions and targets and share information with partners including LBAP Partnerships
 - liaise with Lead Partners for UK species reporting.
 - vi. Provide representation to any over-arching UK habitat group established by the UK Biodiversity Standing Committee.

(III) The Species Expert Group

This group will act as a single point of contact for any species and/or species habitat queries from the Ecosystem Groups and the Biodiversity Policy Group. It will be made up of representatives from each of the main taxonomic groups (mammals, birds, herpetiles, fish, invertebrates, vascular plants, lower plants and fungi), including Agency and NGO specialists.

This group will have two primary roles:

1. Identify habitat/site priorities and integrate species actions across taxa, and maintain a list of priority actions for implementation by Ecosystem Groups, the Biodiversity Policy Group and other delivery bodies.
2. Provide, either directly or via seeking information elsewhere, relevant habitat management advice for particular species or groups of species. This will reduce the burden particularly on small NGO organisations that may have to deal with multiple

enquiries from all Ecosystem Groups. Much of the documented information which can be provided by this group can be collated on the WBP website, but it may still need interpretation or more specific advice.

The Species Expert Group will take responsibility for:

- i. integrating and maintaining a list of actions (to be updated annually with species lead partners) for species where urgent action is required. This will represent a rolling programme of actions based on assessment of priority and will be provided to relevant Ecosystem Groups and/or appropriate delivery bodies for implementation;
- ii. identifying knowledge and skills gaps, and either addressing these directly or recommending to the WBP how they could be filled;
- iii. identifying policy constraints and, through representation to the Biodiversity Policy Group, helping to drive policy development and monitor outcomes;
- iv. maintaining links, where appropriate and effective, with current UK species groups and providing representation to any overarching UK species group established by the UK Biodiversity Standing Committee;
- v. providing guidance to Ecosystem Groups and the Biodiversity Policy Group on the integration of species habitat management needs. Providing recommendations for the resolution of any incompatible management requirements on both a general and case-by-case basis;
- vi. providing support to species Lead Partners with information required for reporting processes.
 - Working with experts on climate change to take into account the potential impacts on species and their habitats.

(IV) Species Lead Partners

WBP will identify species Lead Partners from organisations within Wales with the appropriate skills and remit. These may be based on individual species, grouped species, or grouped taxa. There will be a presumption an existing Lead Partner (or partners) identified and/or working at the UK level will be integrated into this mechanism for BAP delivery in Wales.

The Lead Partners will work with and be supported by a range of partners willing to contribute towards actions for a species (or group of species). They will take responsibility for leading the work required to plan, monitor and review progress with delivery of BAP targets and Environment Strategy Wales (ESW) objectives that relate to species conservation.

Lead partners will have three primary roles:

1. Identify, prioritise, drive action for, and monitor progress towards, the achievement of species targets (aligning delivery across appropriate levels including local and regional partnerships);
2. Maintain standards for monitoring and reporting progress against those targets and review the status of priority species.

3. Coordinate information exchange, collaborative action and maintain consistency between local, country and UK-level BAP delivery for species.

The Lead Partners will take responsibility for:

- i. agreeing specific Wales-level targets and, where possible, disaggregate these to the LBAP level with other stakeholders
- ii. advising the Ecosystem Groups on those habitat actions required to meet the needs of specific species
- iii. providing the Species Expert Group with a list of actions allowing them, where relevant, to be integrated across species and taxa for multi-species delivery
- iv. providing advice to WBP on research and monitoring/surveillance needs
- v. providing advice to land managers and LBAP partnerships on biodiversity delivery
- vi. identifying policy constraints and, through representation to the Biodiversity Policy Group, helping to drive policy development and monitor outcomes
- vii. coordinating reporting for species through appropriate mechanisms including the BARS and liaising with Species Expert and Ecosystem Groups for UK species reporting
- viii. identifying the required resources in partnership with others, including ensuring the expertise of individuals and/or organisations active in species conservation is fully engaged in the process of planning and delivering action
- ix. maintaining communication with Lead Partners in the other countries and providing representation on UK species groups where appropriate
- x. liaising with other relevant species Lead Partners where joint approaches could be beneficial, and identifying priority areas for delivering biodiversity.

(V) Local Delivery

Local Biodiversity Action Plan Partnerships

(Annex H of the WBF continues to provide information on the remit of an LBAP and roles and responsibilities of local partners)

The 24 LBAP partnerships in Wales are coordinated by Biodiversity Officers who are hosted by Local and National Park Authorities. These partnerships are a critical component of the proposed structure as they will facilitate the delivery and reporting of local action by managing the LBAP on BARS and linking to local action delivered by others. The coordination of LBAP contributions combined with those actions delivered through other mechanisms will ultimately enable delivery at landscape scale and larger sea-scale. The Local Biodiversity Action Plans are expected to hold the local targets on BARS.

In this regard, this component of the proposed structure will:

- i. agree and confirm local targets for delivering Wales' priority habitats and species informed by local expertise and the advice provided by the Ecosystem Groups and species Lead Partners, where appropriate;
- ii. agree action and targets for locally identified priorities to ensure local distinctiveness and encourage full community participation;

- iii. ensure targets are fully reflected in appropriate policy instruments and strategies at local levels, including Local Development Plans, Community Strategy, National Park Management Plans, Spatial Plans etc. In some cases, this will require cooperation between local areas or regions. It will also require liaison with the Biodiversity Policy Group;
- iv. agree delivery priorities, taking account of any existing ‘vision’ maps (spatial plans etc) and aiming to enhance biodiversity at a landscape and larger sea-scale and increase the resilience of habitats, sites and ecosystems to fragmentation and climate change;
- v. promote awareness and understanding of the importance of biodiversity and the action the public, community groups, business, public authorities and statutory undertakers can take to protect and enhance this resource;
- vi. identify and secure funding for delivering local and all Wales priority action including community participation, awareness and education activities;
- vii. monitor local delivery using local groups, volunteers and others involved with the LBAP partnership;
- viii. report on actions and targets using BARS, and contribute to national reporting rounds as required;
- ix. through the partnership, provide representation on the Wales Ecosystem Groups.

Other Local Delivery Mechanisms

This includes the work of all those involved in delivering biodiversity action in Wales and the various tools and mechanisms they use. This action is undertaken by a huge number of dedicated individuals and groups as well as statutory and voluntary organisations representing different sectors across Wales. Capturing this expertise, knowledge and activity will help inform future action and focus limited resources where the greatest benefit to biodiversity can be achieved. The new approach to BAP in Wales expects conservation organisations and groups to work more closely with LBAP partnerships to enhance biodiversity using all available delivery mechanisms. All those involved are encouraged to share information on their contribution to the local targets on BARS even if they are not directly working with the LBAP partnership. The WBP Support Team and LBAP Partnerships will work with other sectors and with smaller groups and individuals, to support them to share information and link into the BAP process wherever possible.

(VI) WBP Steering Group

This group is chaired by the Welsh Assembly Government and supported by a partnership Secretariat consisting of Support Team members hosted by the Wildlife Trusts, CCW and the Assembly.

The WBP Steering Group will be expected to:

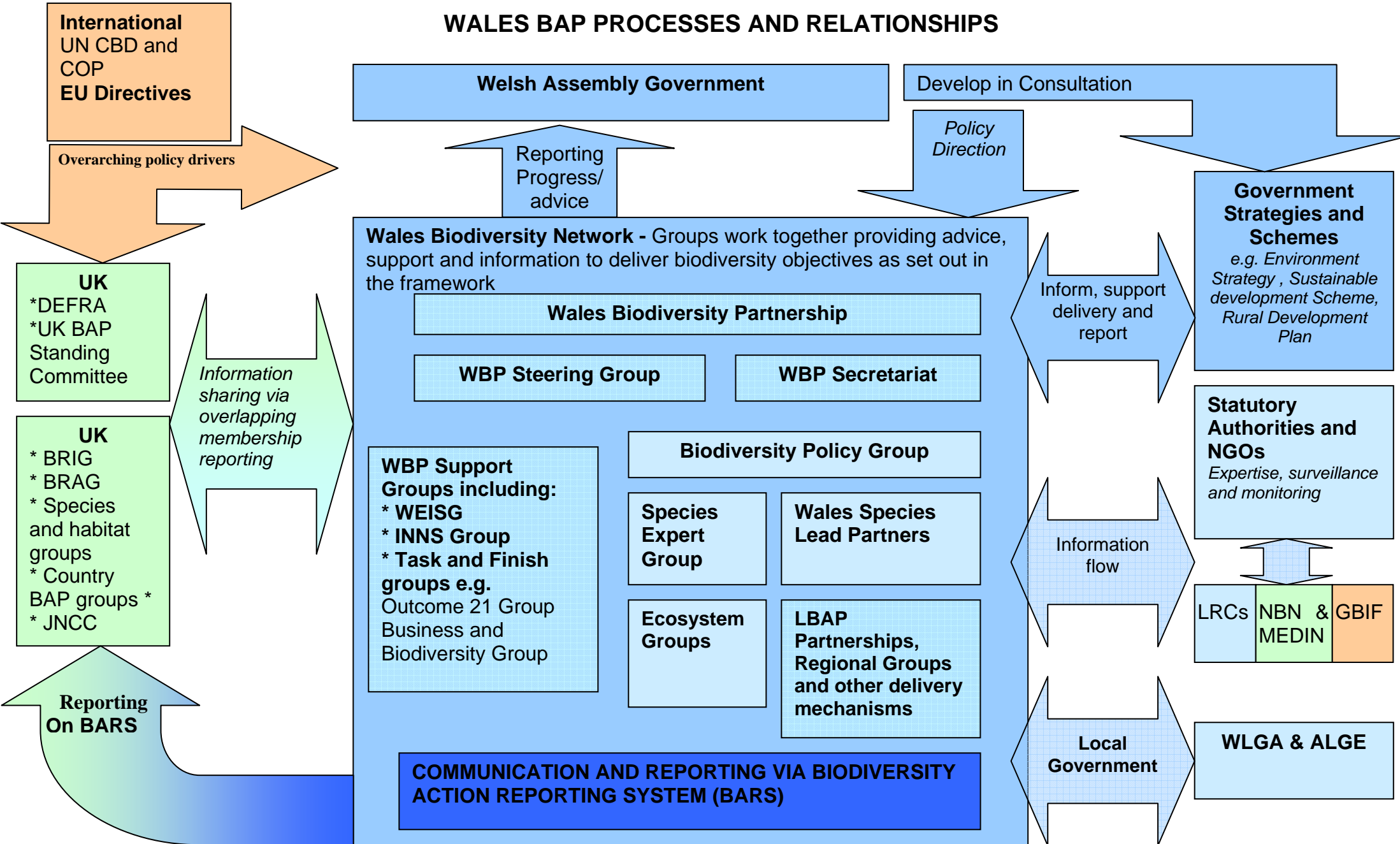
- i. lead implementation of the new delivery mechanism and ensure organisations are committed to achieving targets and held accountable for their agreed contributions;

- ii. work to integrate the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into the projects, programmes and policies of other sectors;
- iii. develop a framework for delivering the ecosystem approach through the new Wales BAP based on the UK National Approach. Coordinate and facilitate the delivery of this approach across Wales using the new BAP structure;
- iv. ensure that work of WBP is considered in the context of the potential impacts of climate change, with expertise provided through linkage with the Climate Change Commission for Wales and other experts in the field;
- v. champion the Biodiversity Policy group and ensure that BAP is delivered through emerging policy, programme, funding and other mechanisms as advised by the Biodiversity Policy group;
- vi. provide the link between Environment Strategy Wales and with the UK BAP to:
 - identify synergies and/or interdependencies that exist with the work of other groups, and work with them to highlight/resolve obstacles;
 - identify where Environment Strategy Wales actions could deliver BAP targets to better align Environment Strategy action and BAP reporting;
 - work to align future reviews of the Environment Strategy Action plan with the UK BAP reporting results and Wales Biodiversity Framework review;
 - through the UK Biodiversity Research Advisory Group (BRAG), identify, promote and facilitate Wales research priorities, contribute to biodiversity research networking in the UK and support knowledge transfer activities in Wales. BRAG website: <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=3900>
- vii. formalise and coordinate links with UK, European and International Groups and Committees where appropriate representation is not provided at a UK level, to ensure effective communication and joint working;
- viii. support the work of the LBAP partnerships;
- ix. act as a conduit for the work of PAW Cymru with a Police Force representative promoting the issue of wildlife crime within the steering group;
- x. facilitate communication on, and involvement in, biodiversity through the development of a communication plan. To include mechanisms such as developing and maintaining the WBP website, continued support for and use of *Natur Cymru – Nature of Wales*, organising and running conferences and workshops, sharing best practice and coordinating Wales wide awareness initiatives;
- xi. secure funds to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of the new BAP Structure and actively support partners to secure resources for delivery of BAP targets;
- xii. identify training needs and gaps in expertise and secure commitment to meet this demand through existing and new initiatives;

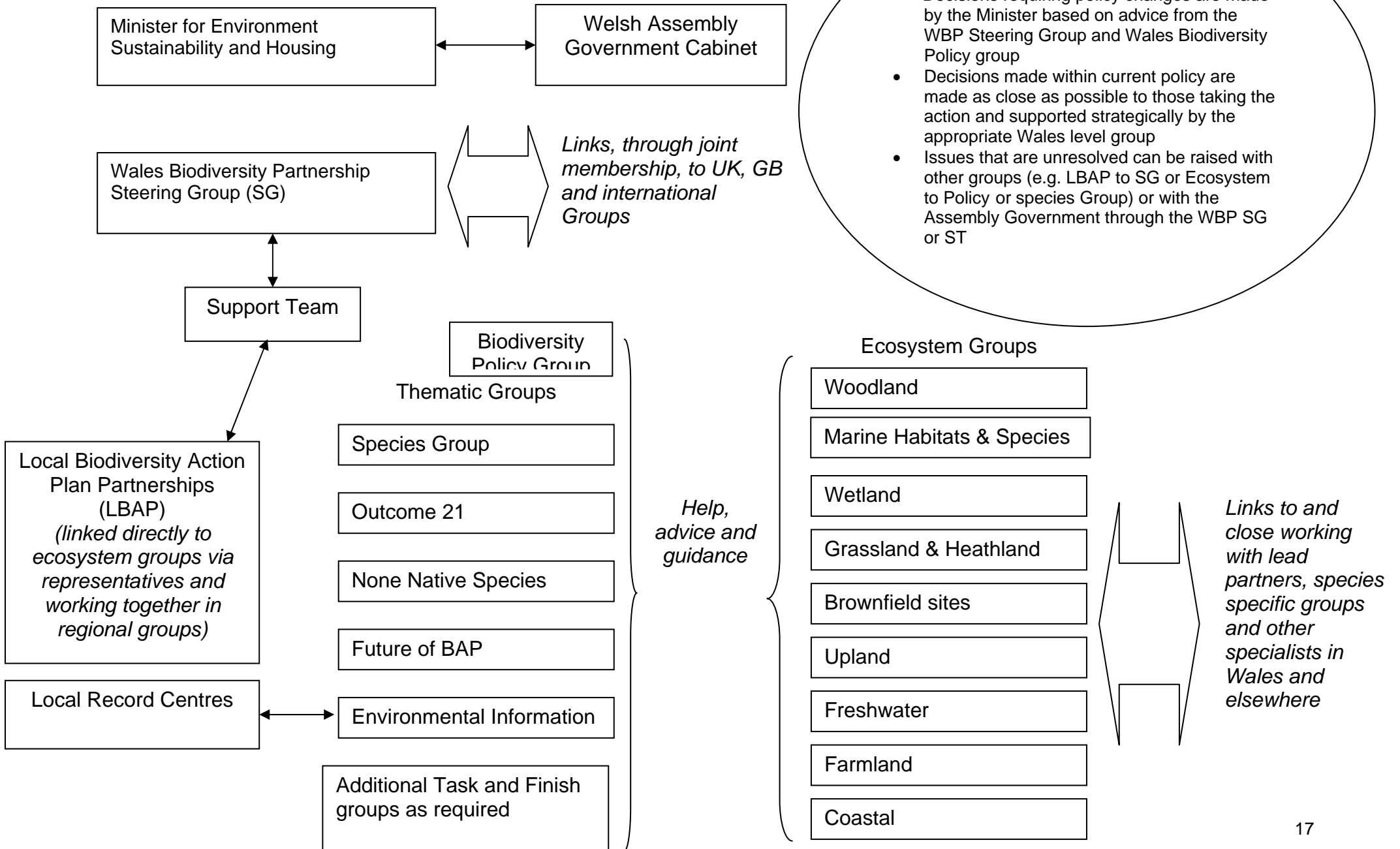
xiii. monitoring and reporting:

- receive reports from the Group Chairs every November and produce and publicise an annual report on progress towards delivering biodiversity targets in Wales in *Natur Cymru*;
- support the continued development and maintenance of BARS while promoting its use widely and providing practical support to others to ensure they report action locally;
- evaluate progress towards biodiversity delivery in Wales following each UK BAP reporting round, having consideration for the quality of information used to inform reporting. Where satisfactory progress is not being made, either towards biodiversity targets or through failings in the delivery mechanism, the WBP is to take appropriate action;
- develop indicators to evaluate the performance of the Wales BAP delivery mechanism including indicators which will monitor the impact on biodiversity of any policy changes / policy development initiated by the Biodiversity Policy Group.

WALES BAP PROCESSES AND RELATIONSHIPS



Appendix 3: Biodiversity in Wales Governance Structure



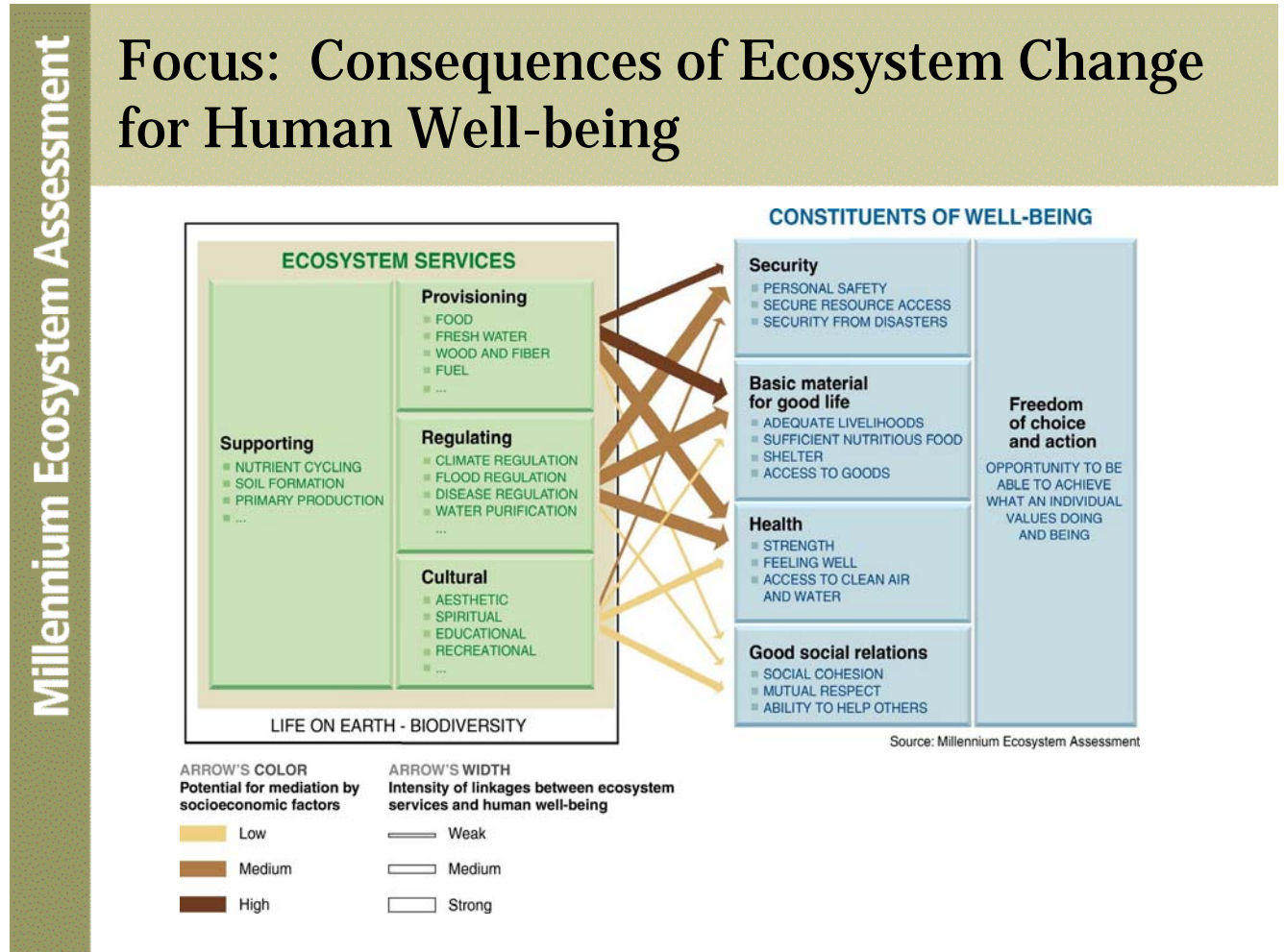
APPENDIX 4: Ecosystem Groups

Ecosystem Group	Priority habitats included	Chair/Secretariat of Habitat Group
Lowland Farmland	Arable Field Margins Hedgerows Traditional Orchards	Chair: Welsh Assembly Government (WAG)
Lowland Grassland and Heathland	Dry Acid Grassland Lowland Calcareous Grassland Lowland Meadows Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pastures Calaminarian Grasslands Lowland Heathland	Chair: National Trust Secretariat: WBP Support Team
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	Chair: Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) Secretariat: CCW
Freshwater	Eutrophic Standing Waters Mesotrophic Lakes Oligotrophic and Dystrophic Lakes Ponds Aquifer-fed Naturally Fluctuating Water Bodies Rivers (including Chalk Rivers)	Chair: CCW Secretariat: Environment Agency

Ecosystem Group	Priority habitats included	Chair/Secretariat of Habitat Group
Wetlands	Lowland Fens Lowland Raised Bog Reedbeds Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh	Chair: CCW Secretariat: CCW
Coastal	Coastal Saltmarsh Coastal Vegetated Shingle Coastal Sand Dunes Maritime Cliff and Slopes	Chair: CCW Secretariat: WBP Support Team
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	Chair: WAG Secretariat: CCW

Ecosystem Group	Priority habitats included	Chair/Secretariat of Habitat Group
	<i>Musculus discors</i> beds Blue mussel beds Horse mussel beds Maerl beds Saline Lagoons Intertidal Mudflats	
Urban and Brownfield	Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land	Chair: CCW Secretariat: CCW
Woodland	Lowland Beech and Yew Woodland Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland Upland Mixed Ashwoods Upland Oakwood Wet Woodland Wood Pasture and Parkland	Forestry Commission Secretariat: Forestry Commission

Appendix 5 Linkages among Biodiversity, Ecosystem Services and Human Well-Being



Reference: *Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005)*

Appendix 6

Favourable Conservation Status Under Council Directive 92/43/EEC (The Habitats Directive)

1. HABITATS

The conservation of a habitat is the sum of the influences on a natural habitat and its typical species that may affect its long-term natural distribution, structure and functions as well as the long-term survival of its typical species.

The conservation of a natural habitat will be taken as 'favourable' when:

- its natural range and areas it covers within that range are stable or increasing, and
- the specific structure and function which are necessary for its long-term maintenance exist and are likely to continue to exist for the foreseeable future, and
- the conservation status of its typical species is favourable.

2. SPECIES

The conservation status of a species is the sum of the influences acting on the species that may affect the long term distribution and abundance of its populations.

The conservation status will be taken as 'favourable' when:

- population dynamics data on the species indicate that it is maintaining itself on a long term basis as a viable component of its natural habitats, and
- the natural range of the species is neither being reduced nor is likely to be reduced for the foreseeable future, and
- there is and will probably continue to be sufficiently large habitat to maintain its population on a long-term basis.

Appendix .7. – Summary Table

Type of Action	Responsible for Preparation	Implementation	Advice	Wales and UK Reporting
Habitat Actions	Ecosystem Groups	Ecosystem Groups LBAPs Other Partners	Ecosystem Group	Ecosystem Group
Species-signposting action	Species Lead Partners	Ecosystem Groups LBAPs Other Partners	Species Expert Group Species Lead Partners	Species Lead Partners
Species specific Action	Species Lead Partners	Species Lead Partners LBAPs Other Partners	Species Expert Group Species Lead Partners	Species Lead Partners

ACRONYMS

ALGE – Association of Local Government Ecologists
BAP – Biodiversity Action Plan
BARS – Biodiversity Action Reporting System
BRAG – Biodiversity Research and Advisory Group
BRIG – Biodiversity Reporting and Information Group
CBD – Convention on Biological Diversity
CCW – Countryside Council for Wales
COP – Convention of the Parties (CBD)
DEFRA – Department of Environment, Fisheries and Rural Affairs (UK Government)
ESG – Ecosystem Group
EU – European Union
GB – Great Britain
HAPs – Habitat Action Plans
INNS – Invasive Non-native Species
JNCC – Joint Nature Conservation Committee
LBAP – Local Biodiversity Action Plan
LBAP Partnership – Local Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership
LRC – Local Record Centre
MEA – Millennium Ecosystem Assessment
MEDIN – Marine Environmental Data and Information Network
NERC Act – Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)
NBN – National Biodiversity Network
RSPB – Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SAPs – Species Action Plans
SEG – Species Expert Group
UK – United Kingdom
UN – United Nations
WAG – Welsh Assembly Government
WBF – Wales Biodiversity Framework
WBP – Wales Biodiversity Partnership (SG Steering Group/ST Support Team)
WEIF – Wales Environment Information Forum
WEISG – Wales Environment Information Steering Group
WLGA – Welsh Local Government Association