

UK SPAR SCIENTIFIC WORKING GROUP MEETING

23 May 2013

10:30 – 15:30, JNCC, Peterborough

Draft minutes

Present:

Ian Bainbridge, SNH (Chair)
Sarah Anthony, NE
Nigel Buxton, SNH
Richard Hearn, WWT
David Stroud, JNCC
Ant Maddock, JNCC
Kate Jennings, RSPB
Cherry-Ann Vickery, JNCC (minutes)

By video:

Julie Black, JNCC
Steven Dora, Scottish Government
Sian Whitehead, Natural Resources Wales

By teleconference:

Andy Tully, Defra

Introduction and general matters

1. Welcome and apologies; matters for AOB; membership changes

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting. Introductions were given and apologies received from Sallie Bailey, Jeremy Wilson, Miranda Cooper and Louise Leighton. DAS confirmed that Jessa Battersby, JNCC would be joining the group at the next meeting. I.B suggested that 90% of the work for the report had now been done and would be ready for sign off by September. A.T confirmed that Defra had awarded the tender for the peer review to Colin Galbraith and that the peer review was scheduled to be completed by mid-June.

2. Minutes of last meeting; amendments and approval

The minutes of the 5 February 2013 meeting were agreed subject to;

p2 typo, word being to be removed.

p3 Additional action to be added by K.J;

Action 5a. Sub-group to revisit Sanderling to consider whether there are key sites which would raise SPA provision in line with the SPI.

Following amendments, the minutes would be uploaded to the website.

Action 1. CAV to action.

SPA Review

3. Progress report on Tranche 1: CSG comments on Tranche 1 recommendations (paper)

DAS presented the Tranche 1 tables and asked the group for their comments.

Action 2. DAS to resend all papers for the meeting to SWG.

The Tranche 1 paper had been sent to CSG in April and the Phase II assessments had now been added. CSG had expressed their approval of the work so far, but had also expressed the view that the overall timetable would not be achievable in the timescales.

Progress had been made on the SPI paper and J.W had produced a revised draft of the paper with the intention of submitting in late June.

Action 3. DAS to approach the editor of Bird Study with a view to publishing the paper in a near future edition.

Action 4. DAS to incorporate comments from J.W by 12 June and further comments from the group by 20 June.

The group approved the Tranche 1 table and signed it off.

4. Tranche 2 assessments (papers)

DAS updated the group on progress of the Tranche 2 assessments by the sub-group, which had now been completed except for 3 species (Black -throated Diver, Br and NB Chough). DAS presented the Tranche 2 assessments and explained the content and progress to date. The group discussed in depth the layout and presentation of the tables and made recommendations for improvement.

Action 5. DAS to rearrange headings 15 & 16.

The group discussed presentation styles including subtext or colour coding individual columns and it was agreed to keep the format simple. It was suggested that the final product should also be produced as an Excel file allowing the data to be filtered. The group discussed layout, content and individual species in depth and I.B concluded that the report was thorough and complete and he thanked the group for their hard work.

Action 6. DAS to check the list against the Rare Breeding Bird Panel lists.

Action 7. DAS to change the column heading for Table 3 (Material change of status since 1990s review) J.B to cross check with marine SPA review and advise on suitable wording.

Action 8. DAS to review species categorised as vagrants.

Action 9. Appropriate wording required for marine checks.

Action 10. DAS to add a status for Red-backed Shrike and other species without status in the 2001 Review. eg to define R-B S as extinct.

Action 11. SWG to track change comments in Table 3 and send to AM (cc DAS) by 6 June.

Action 12. A.M to collate comments for DAS who will come up with suitable wording.

Action 13. DAS to produce the final table in both Word and Excel format.

The group discussed the Annex 3 accounts and sections 7 & 8 which still need updating.

Action 14. DAS to amend wording for section 7, circulate to the group and also update section 8.

Action 15. DAS to remove the reference to international and national (BAP) action plans p.45.

Following discussion of how to improve map title references, SWG approved the document.

Action 16. DAS to liaise with CAs over wording of map title references and circulate to the SWG for approval.

DAS presented two tables entitled 'Crude comparison of change of total numbers with SPA suites from 1990s to 2000s', and 'Changes in total numbers within relevant SPA suites' tables and explained the content. It was felt these should not be used in the new review or the assessments, but may be useful in future as an indicator of the management of SPAs. I.B suggested presenting the information graphically as a future option.

5. Management recommendations (paper)

DAS presented the paper on SPA species recommendations, which had previously been discussed at the 5 February 2013 meeting.

Action 17. WG to make recommendations on each species by the end of June to DAS, which would then be presented to SWG in July.

6. Next steps and timetable for the review

A.M opened discussion on this item and explained there was some confusion by CSG over timings. SWG felt that perhaps the CSG view that the timetable was not achievable may have been because they considered Phase 2 to be included in the March 2014 deadline. SWG confirmed that only Phase 1 of the process would be completed by March 2014.

Action 18. A.M to revise the timetable to include revisions by September 2013.

- Peer reviews to be added by July
- June – send SPI to Bird Study
- Tranche 2 - CSG in July
- End August redraft of report with tranche 1 & 2 material, description of Decision Framework and SPI by I.B & A.M
- September send draft report to agencies for their approval
- October – final outcomes & agency recommendations to CSG
- October – January – prepare final report
- January submit to CSG
- March – submit to Joint Committee for approval

By the end of August, Tranche 1 & 2 would be amended and proformas for all species also updated. All agreed that this would provide a suitable trigger point for the DAs to begin working up phase 2 timetables with the respective country agencies if they so wished. DAS explained that all species accounts should be updated later in the year.

I.B mentioned that the draft Phase 1 report chapters 1-5 would be re-edited by the end of August. The group discussed the timetable of both the science and production side and I.B suggested DAS should focus on the scientific elements while I.B and A.M would work in parallel on the production.

In regard to Phase 2, DAS asked what input the CAs would need from SWG,. It was suggested that SWG could provide scientific advice and proposals.

The full revised Phase 1 timetable is attached as Annex 1.

Action 19. I.B and A.M to work on redrafting the report by the end of August.

Other items

7. **Article 12 reporting and assessment of change within SPA network (information item)**

DAS presented this item briefly and explained that the Article 12 reporting was on track for reporting to the Commission by the end of December. This would provide an update on the state of the SPA network.

8. **Progress with other matters, review of APs from last meeting**

Secretariat to check date of the next ESG meeting, 6 June has been sent out to the group.

9. **Progress from bilateral discussions – brief updates**

- **Northern Ireland**
- **Wales**
- **Scotland**
- **England**

The group very briefly covered this item with N.B giving an update on progress in Scotland.

10. **Any other business**

Agenda items for the next ESG meeting were discussed and the following were suggested, Tranche 1 & 2 summary paper, the revised timetable, terms of reference background (proforma for species accounts) and the sign-off process. A.T reminded the TAG of the need to provide submissions in a timely manner in order to allow ESG members sufficient time to consider before the meeting.

K.J updated the group on Action 3 from the minutes of 5 February re WeBS.

DAS reported that the WeBS Alerts report was now live:

<http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/webs/publications/webs-alerts>

Action 20. R.H mentioned a paper on Goosander, he was editing for Waterbird Populations and offered to include it as an agenda item at the next meeting.

11. **Date and venue for next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on 12 November 2013 at JNCC, Monkstone House.

Annex 1 Timetable for Phase 1

Date	Species recommendations and advice	Progress
February '13	Tranche 1a - 90 spp to SWG (5/2/13) Tranche 1b to be considered by sub-group (26/2/13)	completed
March '13	Peer review spec Tranche 1a 18 spp SWG by email (→ issues arising)	completed completed
April '13	Tranche 1 & e.g. of spp accounts CSG/ (→ issues arising)	completed
May '13	Tranche 2 considered by sub-group	completed
June '13	Tranche 2 SWG (→ issues arising)	completed
June '13	Colin Galbraith's peer review of Decision Framework	
June '13	(Peer review) Submit the SPI paper to Bird Study	
2 July '13	Deadline for CSG papers to Paul Rose	
16 July '13	Tranche 1 & 2 summary (with peer review results) CSG/ESG (→ issues arising) for them to approve Tranche 2. This is needed before going to the countries for final sign off.	In parallel the editorial group to redraft the original report ready to incorporate the approved Tranche 1 & 2 summary text
31 August '13	Deadline for the draft final report early edits and for the Tranche 1 & 2 paper to be merged into the draft final report	
12 September	Deadline for papers to SNH Scientific Advisory Committee	
26 Sept '13	Draft final report to the agencies for approval including recommendations to SNH Scientific Advisory Committee	
October '13	Species accounts completed and incorporated into the draft final report	
Nov '13	Resolve any outstanding issues and ensure all agencies are considering the report	
12 Dec '13	Concluding report and draft final report to EMB for process sign off	
January '14	Advice to CSG & final agency sign off before JNCC committee	
February '14	Papers for Committee to be received by end of February	
March '14	Agreement of recommendations by Joint Committee prior to formal advice to government	