

Special Session on Ecosystem Services

Joint session between BES and
the UK Biodiversity Research Advisory Group

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This presentation

- Introduction to UK BRAG
 - UK BRAG objectives
 - BES - UK BRAG special session 2007
- BES – Defra joint meeting on ecosystem services December 2006
- Progress since 2006

What is UK BRAG ?

- A daughter of the UK Biodiversity Partnership Board
- Composed of ~30 scientists and officials representing UK biodiversity researchers, funders and practitioners
- UK BRAG is the UK's National Biodiversity Research Platform
- UK BRAG is **not** a funding body



UK BRAG exists to:

- Identify, promote and facilitate biodiversity research to support BAP commitments
- Coordinate UK engagement with European biodiversity research issues - a national biodiversity research platform
- Contribute to effective biodiversity research networking in the UK, leading to increased interdisciplinary capacity
- Support knowledge transfer activities



How can success be measured?

- Improved networking between researcher, policymaker and practitioner communities
- Increased capacity for biodiversity research in the UK, particularly interdisciplinary approaches
- More effective knowledge transfer, including science-to-policy, facilitated by the Group's activities



Topics covered so far

- Socio-economic issues
- The role of biodiversity in ecosystem function
- Monitoring and surveillance of biodiversity and evaluation of actions
- Habitat and ecosystem management
- Conservation of genetic diversity
- The impact of non-native species
- Climate change and adaptation



Research Needs for UK Biodiversity

A summary of the important knowledge
gaps, identified by the UK Biodiversity
Research Advisory Group, 2003-2006

Edited by Richard Ferris



First UK BRAG summary report published in 2007



UK BRAG
biodiversity research in action

Future challenges

- Influence the funders of research
- Ensure that research supports country and UK biodiversity action plans
- Ensure effective engagement with European biodiversity research issues
- Contribute to effective biodiversity research networking in the UK, with an increase in interdisciplinary capacity



For further information on

UK BRAG, visit

www.ukbrag.org.uk



Key points from Dec 2006 Meeting (1)

- MA provides an important framework to assess the state of the UK's ecosystem services
- Living with Environmental Change should enable the UK to become a world leader
- Ecologists need to refocus their research to give greater consideration to how ecological processes contribute to human wellbeing
- Preliminary ecosystem assessments will be useful for identifying gaps and priorities

Key points from Dec 2006 Meeting (2)

- Long-term monitoring is crucial to understanding changes to ecosystem services
- There needs to be collaboration between natural and social scientists from the outset.
- Policymakers, business and other user-groups need to be engaged in the process
- All should work to communicate the importance of ecosystem services to the public

Progress since Dec 2006

- Further Defra research, case studies, and Ecosystem Assessment Scoping study
- Defra Ecosystem Approach Action Plan

Ecosystem Approach Action Plan & Introductory Guide (Dec 2007)

www.defra.gov.uk

Securing a healthy natural
environment:

An action plan for embedding an ecosystems approach



defra
Department for Environment
Food and Rural Affairs

www.defra.gov.uk

An introductory guide to valuing
ecosystem services



defra
Department for Environment
Food and Rural Affairs

Key features of an ecosystems approach

- Whole systems not single outcomes
- Importance of joined-up working
- More people-focused
- Linking environmental, economic and social benefits

Progress since Dec 2006

- Further Defra research, case studies, and Ecosystem Assessment Scoping study
- Defra Ecosystem Approach Action Plan
- LWEC now a reality
- NERC Theme Action Plans
- Announcement by Hilary Benn on 21 July of National Ecosystem Assessment

