

12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Overseas Territories Biodiversity Group (OTBG)  
Room 106 Nobel House - London  
27<sup>th</sup> January 2013 2-4pm

**Meeting note**

**Attendees:**

Colin Clubbe (Kew)  
Sally Cunningham (Defra)  
Richard Findon (Defra)  
Siôn Griffiths (FCO)  
Clare Hamilton (Defra)  
Stacey Hughes (Defra)  
Razi Latif (DfID) – by phone  
Tara Pelembe (JNCC)  
Scott Davidson(FCO)

Stewart Guy (MOD)

**Apologies**

Tony Weighell (JNCC)  
Kedell Worboys (UKOTA)  
Jane Hallet (MOD)  
Helen Stevens (FCO) – TBC

**1. EAC Report response**

A timetable for response has been prepared, along with an initial division of responsibility for preparing a response to the recommendations

**2. Funding:**

*2.1. LIFE Plus*

The LIFE Plus Regulation was finalised and signed off on the 20<sup>th</sup> December 2014<sup>1</sup>. It is anticipated that the first call will be announced in May. A workshop is being organised for the 25<sup>th</sup> March to which the Commission has agreed to attend, and will be preceded by an informal workshop on the 24<sup>th</sup> March. The latter will be a platform to test project ideas that have been submitted, particularly those on OTs. A list of ideas for OT projects has been compiled and these will be reviewed by Defra, Beta and JNCC to see which fit within the scope of LIFE Plus.

There is an additional training event on logical frameworks planned.

*2.2. BEST<sup>2</sup>*

BEST is an EU level funding mechanism which focuses on funding projects in and for the EU Overseas Countries and Territories. The third phase is being explored, and this is likely to focus on creating a networking structure including regional offices seeking to leverage funding from other sources. There are concerns that this will be creating an additional 'layer' with little real benefit. There has not been an official approach to HMG for input into the direction and focus of BEST phase 3.

Current (Phase 2) BEST funding contributes to UKOT projects in the Falklands, Caribbean and British Antarctic Territory.

*2.3. DCI*

KW has flagged up that there is the possibility that DCI funding (committed during LIFE Plus negotiation) will be distributed through BEST. Additional clarity on this required.

*2.4. Save Our Species (SOS) fund*

CH has held discussions to see whether the IUCN SOS fund could be used to fund conservation work for native and endemics on the verge of extinction in the UKOTs. This fund is currently funded and administered by the World Bank, and only available to ODA eligible countries (doesn't include ODA UKOTs). There is the potential that this can be expanded to include OCTs in the future with the emerging possibility of additional funding being contributed which would not necessarily have the same conditions attached.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/lifeplus.htm>

<sup>2</sup> (earlier call here) [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/funding/finansup\\_11\\_best.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/funding/finansup_11_best.htm)

Various group members have connections with different sections of IUCN (SSC, IUCN-UK Committee) and it was agreed that a note will be issued from the group to these IUCN entities to encourage the expansion of SOS to include UKOTs. Other bodies and organisations active in respect of OTs (i.e. RSPB) would be encouraged to do the same.

#### *2.5. Net Biome*

Discussion of information paper provided by Colin Hindmarch

### **3. Contact with the EU**

#### *3.1. EU OCT Environmental Profiles*

Discussion of the profiles and HMG response. Responses have already been submitted by DECC (Darren Freezor) and RSPB.

#### *3.2. PWP*

**KW** to feed back to the group by email on any recent developments or activities.

#### *3.3. EU Overseas Conference*

Discussion on UK engagement with proposed conference. The next steering group meeting will be this week. SG from FCO is trying to attend. Points raised to feed into the Steering Group discussion were primarily around (1) the date: Defra won't be able to engage if proposed dates aren't changed due to the proximity to CBD CoP and this could also hamper engagement by the European Commission (2) Topics: Ideas for topics/themes included Life Plus funding, renewable energy, and themes that had been identified as Life Plus project ideas by OTs.

### **4. JMC – follow up and next steps**

DECC are keen to take renewable energy forward, and establish workshops. They have produced draft questionnaire to scope out what OTs want out of such a workshop.

Minister Simmonds is keen to work closer with independent Caribbean on renewable energy to see what the options are and to try to share expertise and finances where available.

### **5. OTBS follow up report**

Document previously discussed, a draft has now been prepared as a Defra publication with photos from projects that have been funded through Darwin. This can feed into the response to the EAC. Input from MOD would be welcome.

This can also feed into the May/June Stakeholder meeting and to Sherpa meetings before JMC. The possibility of this being an annual report was also discussed.

The question of the remit of the group, and whether it should be expanded to include wider environment issues was raised. This feeds into a discussion for the next meeting on widening the TORs for the group.

### **6. Workshops**

There have been a number of workshops delivered by HMG (Kew technical workshop in the Caribbean, JNCC MPA technical workshop), and there are a number of workshops being planned (CITES, Life plus, South Atlantic IMS, Fisheries). The CITES workshop has had a lot of positive feedback from the UKOTs, and it is being planned to coincide with the Life Plus workshop in March. It was discussed how these could all be 'badged' under the umbrella of HMG's support to OTs. This can contribute to the EAC response.

### **7. The JNCC strategy 2014/15 and summary of JNCC-NGO meeting.**

TP provided an update.

## **8. AOB**

### *8.1. Use of Huddle*

It was agreed to continue to use Huddle, posting the note of this meeting for comment and review to test further its effectiveness.

### *8.2. Caribbean Challenge Initiative*

There was discussion around how best to engage with this initiative

## **9. Date of next meeting & stakeholder session.**

The next meeting will be in April, and will be held back to back with a stakeholders meeting.