

**UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies
Training and Research Programme**

Note of Steering Group meeting

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Steering Group Meeting**

13 June 2012

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**UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies
Training and Research Programme Steering Group**
Minutes from meeting¹ held 13th June 2012

Training and Research Programme (Work programme 2012-2015)

Items requiring a decision

1. Work plan 2012-15 and feedback from SG Review Meeting in January

Paper circulated on review of process to prepare the 2012-15 workplan. JNCC sought additional feedback from SG on use of a facilitator in order to make informed decisions about future meetings.

It was noted that using a facilitator was considered beneficial in terms of making the best use of everyone's time together and helping JNCC to manage the meeting and ensure they did not dominate the discussions. However, at times the level of detailed discussion was reduced by use of a facilitator. Furthermore, a facilitator with experience and knowledge of the OTs and CDs was considered to be very important.

2. Blue Turtle two award for schools (workplan objective 1.3.1)

Following discussion at the January workplan review meeting on concept of extending the Blue Turtle award to include schools JNCC circulated a discussion paper on the options to take this initiative forward.

The SG was enthusiastic about creating such an initiative. It was agreed to maintain the existing Blue Turtle Award and build on its reputation to include different categories/tiers for schools. Many questions were raised such as whether to include a separate category for primary school children, options for extending the categories to include brown issues as well as green issues, biodiversity and climate change, whether the award would go to the school, pupils, teacher, class and whether individuals could be eligible for an award outside the school environment eg. young person award.

Tony Weighell noted that the JNCC Chairman is very keen on this initiative and we need to create a workable model for taking it forward. It would depend on the first sift going through the territory representatives on the Steering Group and it was suggested that we announce the new 'schools award' at this year's Blue Turtle award ceremony with a view to making the first 'schools award' in 2013.

ACTION 2.1

JNCC (EM) to prepare model for 'schools award' to be circulated to SG for comments by 29/06/12.

Comments from SG by 6/07/12.

Proposal to be presented to JNCC Chairman 11/07/12 for implementation with current Blue Turtle Award

Discussion items

¹ See Annex 1 for attendee list

3. Defra priorities project and links with the OT and CD strategic and research priorities (workplan objectives 5.1 and 6.1)

Tony Weighell noted that following the recent Interdepartmental OT Biodiversity Group meeting (OTBG) Defra are very keen on prioritising their support to the UKOTs. Defra is currently undertaking a project to identify global priorities for UK support for species conservation using a database approach. The Method for the Assessment of Prioritisation of International Species Conservation (MAPISCO) project is a global database of species where species are prioritised on a number of criteria using pre-defined methodology. Defra are keen to look at a subset of this database relevant to the OTs and CDs for prioritisation purposes. JNCC circulated a paper and powerpoint presentation on the MAPISCO project.

The SG supported the concept of a defensible model to help conserve the less glamorous systems and species. However there were concerns about the complexity of such a project including whether there was sufficient data to ensure all species would be fairly represented, achieving a scientifically defensible scoring system, how this species based approach fits with the ethos of the ecosystems approach and how the process and outputs will be reviewed and assessed.

Tony concluded that all these concerns were shared by JNCC and had been expressed to the contractors WCMC. However this process is already underway and JNCC's concern now is that the process doesn't set priorities for the OTs and CDs which are at odds with the territories own views. Also the product needs to be fit for purpose. The SG members were encouraged to feed in comments at this stage of the process.

ACTION 3.1

ALL SG members to send comments on the MAPISCO project, in particular

- i. General comments on the relevance and use of the existing MAPISCO approach to the OTs and CDs – JNCC to collate these and pass to Defra
- ii. Suggested actions (if any) for using this approach to the benefit of OTs and CDs in general
- iii. Is there scope for testing its use in one or more OT/CD?
- iv. Is there a volunteer/s to do this?
- v. Suggestions on how the SG could influence later stages of the work.

Deadline for comments 29/06/12

Tony mentioned that there may be a possibility for another SG face-to-face meeting in the UK to be convened in January/February 2013 as there are a number of projects and reviews currently taking place which could be highlighted and shared. Subject to confirmation of funding JNCC will contact the SG and trawl for interest in this event.

4. Funding (workplan objectives 5.2 and 6.2)

Tony noted that there are a number of funding opportunities for the UKOTs and CDs likely to arise in the next 8-9 months including the possibility of OTEP funding and additional Defra biodiversity work. Once JNCC knows more about this including the timeframe, criteria and amounts we will circulate information to the SG.

Information sharing items

5. University of Reading update on initiatives (work plan objectives 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.54 and 5.1)

Ken Norris provided an update on the initiatives Reading are progressing on behalf of the SG.

Reminder of current call for project ideas for Reading students to undertake in the UKOTs and CDs. Jersey previously submitted some very good project proposals, unfortunately there was no uptake but Ken urged all members to send through ideas for projects to initiate discussion on the feasibility and potential funding options.

Reminder on internships opportunities for OT and CD students to undertake at Reading. Kat is producing a flyer to circulate with details of how the internships can run and this could be circulated at the OT Student workshop in September in order to raise awareness of the opportunities.

Reminder on Reading's capacity to link to UK academic and research expertise. Members were encouraged to send questions to Reading and they will endeavour to follow up with a response or link to a source for further information.

There is also the [Reading University website](#) as a fixed repository of information. Reading is seeking to make all these initiatives self-sustaining. As such they have created a Facebook group² for the OTs and CDs and would like to encourage members to join this group and exchange information, post documents, ask questions etc. The more people and use it has the more effective a tool it will become for the group. In the future it is envisioned that this will be the best mechanism for posting calls, ideas and support.

6. AOB

Elizabeth (JNCC) noted that the next meeting of the group would be in October 2012 and Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust would like to give a presentation on their training opportunities. More information to follow in due course.

Andy (Guernsey) mentioned the creation of a Biodiversity Project Group, following a recent election which resulted in greater interest in the natural environment. The role of this group includes drafting and implementing a Biodiversity Action Plan which is linked to consideration of plans to extend ratification of the CBD to Guernsey.

Karim (Anguilla) noted renewed interest and funding in the Environmental Protection Act which will enable them to bring this into force in the near future.

Nick (Falklands) mentioned the success of the recent environmental mainstreaming project which concluded with a workshop in March and follow-up reports. They are now actively looking at extending the CBD as part of the follow up to the mainstreaming process.

Anton (JNCC South Atlantic rep) noted Tristan da Cunha is undertaking a revision of the Biodiversity Action Plan to reflect updated priorities.

Nikki mentioned that she is now the lead for St Helena on this Steering Group and asked about opportunities for sharing EIAs with other OTs. St Helena and JNCC to follow this up directly.

² <http://www.facebook.com/groups/441339532551503/>

Annex I

Attendees at UK OT Training and Research Programme Steering Group meeting 13th June 2012

Name	Country/Organisation
Christine Roehrer	DfID
Elizabeth Moore	JNCC (Chair)
John Henson Webb/Carol Bowley	JNCC – technical support
Tony Weighell	JNCC
Nikki Chapman	St Helena
Andy McCutcheon	States of Guernsey
Karim Hodge	Anguilla
John Pinel	States of Jersey
Nick Rendell	Falkland Islands
Anton Woolfaardt	JNCC South Atlantic Coordinator