

**Name of UKOT/CD UK Overseas Territories and Crown  
Dependencies  
Training and Research Programme**

Note of meeting

**Steering group meeting note**

May 2011

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## **Overseas Territories Research and Training Group Meeting Note.**

11<sup>th</sup> May 2011

### **Attendees**

Nick Rendell	Falklands (Chair)
Gina Ebanks-Petrie	Cayman
Timothy Austin	Cayman
Mat Cottam	Cayman
Darren Christie	South Georgia
Mark Stevenson	Defra (UK)
John Pinel	Jersey
Tara Pelembe	JNCC (UK)
Christine Roehrer	DFID (UK)
Isabel Peters	St. Helena

### **Apologies:**

Olivia Renshaw, Ken Norris, Richard Selman, Liz Charter, Fiona Gell, Andrew McCutcheon, Lynda Varlack, Samia Sarkis, Jennifer Beschizza.

Round the table updates:

### **Cayman:**

Update on National Conservation Legislation : - still no progress and no direct indication that it is going forward.

Darwin project: Darwin Initiative to Enhance an Established Marine Protected Area System, Cayman Islands. <http://darwin.defra.gov.uk/project/18016/>. Currently 6 months into project which looks at marine parks – 25 years on – joint with Bangor university and the TNC – looking at comprehensive review of the park focussing on fisheries and fish biomass and resiliency - might be able to expand the parks to meet the Caribbean challenge (c. 30% Protected areas).

Mat: updates on terrestrial:

Successful Blue Iguana conservation programme – looking to extend and address rock iguana question in more detail – more structured approach. – Working with Durrell for past 3 years – survey and prep ground work to identify areas. Stakeholder meeting .

Also sent draft climate change policy out for review – need to get presented to cabinet – wrap up to ECACC project funded through DFID. Staff attrition – due to budgets.

## **Darren**

OTEP funding – monitoring post rat eradication project – provides for baseline monitoring of sites for rat eradication – also to get hold of satellite photography of glacial fronts – Darwin project – RSPB – looking at mouse distribution.

One of research priorities – was glacial retreat – tackling aspects of that

Looking at putting in bid for BEST funding – fisheries management (another research priority)

Reindeer eradication – Darwin bid (SG government match funding) - this round.

## **Falklands**

Had a review of the biodiversity strategy – 3-day workshop with scientists and stakeholder groups – have reprioritised the top research aspirations –

2 broad areas

Coastal marine species and ecosystems. Shallow marine environment needs to be a priority because so little work done – baseline data (includes marine bird species etc.)

Biosecurity and invasive species control. Important area highlighted in the past .

Focus mainly because they haven't been focussed on in the same level in the past. Climate change research attracts funding – but baseline data work hard to find funding for,

Need to do more work to engage with stakeholders, land owners etc – workshop was a good starting point for this – getting messages across to different sectors of the community.

Hope to do mini presentations every year – to develop networks.

Research:

FC- several new projects

Darwin challenge fund – Southern sea lions including satellite tracking. Getting good data back on that.

Full Darwin bid going to be submitted to build on that.

At least 4 from Falklands: 2 Challenge projects (sea lions and raptor) – full bids.

Shallow marine survey group – Darwin bid

Shaun Russell – lower plant specialist – (priority in strategy).

John – Jersey.

Interested in seeing what Cayman is doing with wildlife law – updating Jerseys – based on UKs – a lot of EU legislation coming out. Had quite a few issues where clear breaches of the

legislation have been made but no prosecution possible – sites have been cleared leaving no evidence. Hoping to make a bit more useful.

Phase 1 habitat survey (last one carried out 10 years ago) – didn't match JNCC guidelines when carried out last time – going to be a lot stricter with habitat types – have to make locally relevant + comparable with last survey (this summer)

Guernsey – carried out phase 1 habitat survey last year – work with Guernsey to establish local biological records centre.

Birds on the edge – looking at the conservation of farmland birds in Jersey – DOE + Durrell \_ Jersey NT – first large joint project – habitat restoration in the coastal areas – have big problem with land abandonment. In very difficult and inaccessible areas of Jersey

Have been doing a lot of work on amphibians and reptiles – agile frog. Grass snake in v. low numbers – know very little about it. Looking to get a phd looking at the grass snake. Hoping to get external funding for that too. Shared funding opportunities.

South Georgia has done a big legislative review – happy to discuss with John. Get email address.

St. Helena

Changing times – undergoing major review – institutional review. Have signed an MOU with DFID which has led to a number of reforms – incl. Institutional and land reforms + modernising SHG.

Line management changed – report to the Deputy Chief Sec – interim measure.

Full review of environment institutional set up – proposal being finally considered before implementation. Outcome to create a new env. Dept – 3 main sections.

Environmental assessment and advocacy

Nature conservation (policy and strategic level)

Risk Management (includes climate change)

Practical conservation – either ANRD or National Trust contract.

Big step – a lot depends on getting right people in place – head of department will be required. Currently 2 people down.

Interested to hear about legislative review – also proposing to have a complete review of all of environmental legislation. Idea try to create an all encompassing piece of legislation – interested to hear what others are doing and what legislation looks like.

Land development control plan and PA review. Thanks to everyone for help with that.

Completed phase 1 of categories for PA – looking at PA already have proposed, boundaries, criteria and including new areas (including key wirebird sites) + permitted activities etc. Review led by National Trust is being finalised. Working on PA legislation – (to decide whether included in overarching legislation or separate)

Developing TORs to build on initial proposed designation of areas including ground truthing and legal designation.

Need to take strategic environmental assessment (SEA) –

Everything has to be completed by December 2010.

Conservation and biodiversity

Priority 1 – flora and fauna survey – invert baseline data – successful visit from 3 people from Buglife (Darwin scoping) – worked with stakeholders – setting priorities – integrating invert conservation into ecosystem and habitat approach. Buglife will be developing a full Darwin project to be submitted for the up coming round.

Nikki Chapman was on island for 6 weeks – worked with marine section and managed to assist in helping to put ideas forward on how to analyse the 7 years data that exists.

Terrestrial – have a Darwin project to increase capacity to conserve native biodiversity – running an NVQ programme- 3 students doing that + September intake.

Major EIA in progress – phase 2 of wharf improvement project (breakwater development).

EIA training by a trainer – AICOM – 47 people across SHG and the private sector – general awareness and knowledge of EIA processes has increased - + understanding of why EIAs are needed + useful tool.

Gina – can Isabel send contact information for the company who did the EIA training.

Mark Stevenson – Defra

Defra have been running a competition research on invasive species in the South Atlantic – 255000 over 3 years.

St. Helena – impacts of predation on the wirebird – RSPB + STNT

Falklands – invasive plants – Falklands Conservation + Kew

Biocontrol of inverts on Falklands and South Georgia + CABI.

Trying to secure some funding for a second round – different subject area and different region – funding not guaranteed.

Regional approach

Having close involvement and support from OT governments

Left spec. Very broad – asked tenderers to address priorities that had been identified by OTs.

Research and Development funding – same origin as Darwin – but restricted to research – but not implementation. Directed additional source of funding towards OTs when Darwin fund was suspended – argument being that can be directed towards specific priorities. Feedback from the OTs that have benefited from this funding would be useful in building the case for continuing the funding.

Falklands – encouraged by projects and will give feedback.

Isabel – St. Helena – National Trust will be working in partnership with RSBP – will work with OTEP project – will work with National Trust – will give feedback.

Nik – scope potential funding might have –

Mark – if funding confirmed – email group with region and topic and ask for feedback.

Marine

Matt – lionfish project – still getting a lot of support from the local community – one of the largest marine issue at the moment.

One of the areas looking for is to expand work into research into the most effective way of catching the lionfish.

Good sales – high end – article on the BBC

John – jersey – released some ramsar management plans in consultation – set out general policy for how to work within ramsar sites in Jersey – can send/get posted on website.

Please send copy to Mat.

AOB

Christine – report from OCTA climate change workshop in Brussels.

EU funding to OTs – bring to attention 3 processes under negotiation that will significantly influence funding

- (1) Renegotiation of OT association decision
- (2) Review of development policy
- (3) New financial framework – for 2014-2019 will be discussed and defined during European presidency (EDF)

BEST – Commission is after consolidated multi-territory bids that has a strategic angle to it. To make a case for further funding in this direction.

Larger bid coordinated by OCTA/IUCN/OT – larger chance of being considered – just an observation.

Gina mentioned ECCAC –

At present in the UK – 2.9 billion pounds available for climate funding – UK International Climate fund.

OTD can access part of this funding.

ALL ICF money is ODA (Overseas Development Aid) – only 4 OTs are on this list.

At present in the UK – no fund to support cc in non ODA OTs. At EU level – on the development side – a major initiative has been created - Global Climate change alliance – only for ODA eligible countries and territories.

DG climate has been created – in charge of all climate change matters – head of DG spoke at OCTA – confused OCTs with Caribbean Countries – awareness of OCTs not high.

Gina – have been exploring what the availability of funding was to carry work forward – and came out with the same results – doesn't help Cayman. Therefore floating a concept note to look at the development of a regional climate change fund among the OTs in the Caribbean. Need to decide whether regional/national funds, how they would work – source of revenue etc. Active discussion.

DFID – can do v. little about non-ODA OTs accessing funding. Other parts of HMG. OCTs – should be supported by DG climate.

Nick – BEST –

Got the same impression that large regional or cross-territory bids that EU will be looking at. Is it worth putting single territory bids together.

CR – before putting in a whole lot of work – prepare a paragraph and send to BEST officer in DG environment and ask for feedback.

Mat – Do have brief report or write up on the rat eradication.

TP to send link for training.

Christine – thanks for help with information to progress environmental agenda on St. Helena.

Matt + Gina + Tim.



## **Falklands – Research priorities – 2011**

- Predicted changes in climate and how these changes may affect native species and ecosystems and land-use and marine use activities
- Impacts of introduced plants and animals, as well as diseases on native biodiversity.
- There is a need to build up increased baseline knowledge of many top predator marine mammal and seabird species. Additionally our knowledge of the shallow marine and deep water environment is minimal and research is needed in this area.

## **Jersey**

### **St. Helena – research priorities 2011**

- **Baseline flora and fauna surveying and monitoring of terrestrial and marine habitats and analysis and subsequent utilisation of data.**
- Survey and research to establish invertebrate baseline data; Botanisation of inaccessible areas; Analysis of all flora and fauna baseline survey and monitoring data; Development of species/ habitat management plans; Incorporation of data in decision making.
- **Terrestrial ecological restoration**
- To support existing ecological and restoration initiatives, looking at the ecosystem approach; plant health issues including analysis of plant and soil pathogens; Research into hybrid-prone species and conversion of hybrids; and the potential for micropropagation.
- **Climate Change Implications on terrestrial and marine species, habitats and ecosystems**
- Biological and ecological implications of climate change on native biota, ecosystems and services.

### **South Georgia – research priorities 2011**

Understanding the potential impacts of climate change on key exploited fisheries species (toothfish, icefish and krill).

Use data from recent surveys of invasive plants and invertebrates in conjunction with invasive mammal distribution to identify key sites at risk from climate change. This includes a survey to identify cryptic mouse populations around the island.

Ensure compliance with commitments to ACAP, especially through maintaining long-term data sets. These include whole island surveys every 10 years following the 2003/4 Albatross census and the 2005/6 Petrel Surveys, and the continued annual surveys of the breeding Wanderer populations on Albatross and Prion Islands. Additional survey work would be required if rapidly declining populations were identified.