

**UK Overseas Territories Training and Research Programme
Workshop
17 – 18 September 2009, JNCC, Peterborough, UK**

Note of the meeting (Elizabeth Moore and Tara Pelembe, JNCC)

Introduction

The UK Overseas Territories (OTs) Training and Research Programme¹ Steering Group² held a two-day workshop in the UK, 17-18 September, hosted by the JNCC. The aims of the workshop were to systemize and formalize actions to deliver the Programme's objectives. During the workshop a Programme action plan was developed, led by input from members of the Steering Group. This was developed as a rolling work plan which will be added to and refined by members of the Steering Group. The group also undertook a prioritisation exercise which helped to identify activities which are considered important by the group.

The workshop programme³ provided a framework for the discussions. The workshop was chaired by OT representatives. On the first day the Steering Group discussed the achievements of the programme, lessons learnt and developed some ideas to form the basis of a work plan for activities during the next year. At the end of day one the draft work plan was circulated to members of the Steering Group who were unable to attend in person. On the second day the group discussed funding opportunities and during the afternoon were joined by a number of members based in their territories by telephone conference and internet link. This enabled a 'real-time' edit of the work plan to incorporate suggestions from other members of the Steering Group.

Discussion Highlights including agreed action:

1. Action Plan

The focus of the workshop was the development of an Action Plan for the Overseas Territories Training and Research Programme. A draft programme of work was developed for the group for a 5 year period with the top 3 priorities for Year 1 identified for by each participating Overseas Territory. The action plan will be sent to all members of the Steering Group, and the Secretariat will work with the group towards implementation.

2. Priority Actions.

All action is aimed at delivering each OTs top 3 research priorities. There are a number of detailed small actions that will be followed up by the Secretariat such as access to scientific journals, bringing in marine expertise etc. However, the three key areas of priority for the next year are:

- ***Development of the training programme for OT personnel to include:***
 - **Continuation of BSc scholarship**
 - **Creating opportunities for PHD studies on OTs**
 - **Providing short-term training courses as required: some areas of need highlighted were:**
 - **Environmental Impact assessment**
 - **Economic valuation (Bermuda is developing this course)**
 - **Environmental management**
 - **Endangered species management**
 - **Project management**

¹ <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-4113> - to download the OT Training and Research Programme leaflet

² <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-4745>

³ http://www.jncc.gov.uk/pdf/UKOTSG_workshopschedule.pdf

- **Development of a OT Research and Training website to include:**
 - Posting of research done in OTs
 - EIAs
 - Access to scientific journals

- **A regular workshop (every 2 years) where**
 - researchers in OTs + from OTs get together to go through the work that is being done on each OT.
 - Research priorities are reassessed and updated
 - Information and expertise is shared.
 - Is attended by those doing the work in the field.

In addition to the programme of work, other discussions highlighted the following points and actions:

3. National Ecosystem Assessment (NEA)

- The Steering group discussed the UK NEA⁴ which is currently being run by the WCMC (2009 - 2011) in the UK (but does not include the OTs). There was interest from the group in the methodology being used and it was agreed that the OTs might want to consider utilising some of the expertise from the UK model following the results of that exercise in 2011.

4. UKOTA (UK Overseas Territories Association) and OTCC (Overseas Territories Consultative Council)

- During the discussion on the first day it was noted that there could be an opportunity to feed into the OT Consultative Council (OTCC) meeting in December.

5. NET-BIOME⁵

- The Steering Group discussed links between NET-BIOME and the OT Training and Research Programme.

6. Terminology

- The group discussed the relative importance of the use of “ biodiversity” as opposed to “ecosystems”. It was agreed that the term ecosystem would better describe the work of the group than biodiversity, since it is more widely used and could be better conveyed to a greater audience.

7. Funding

- During discussions on funding opportunities available to the OTs it was agreed that it would be useful to have further clarity on the remits of each of the major streams (i.e. JNCC research contribution, OTEP funds and Darwin funds). The GECC GBSC⁶ were asked for assistance in this action, and a note of the workshop will be circulated to GBSC members at their next meeting in November 2009.

⁴ The UK National Ecosystem Assessment (NEA) is the first analysis of the UK’s natural environment in terms of the benefits it provides to society and continuing economic prosperity. For more details see: <http://uknea.unep-wcmc.org/>

⁵ <http://www.netbiome.org/>

⁶ <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-4962>