



**Minutes of the Fifth Meeting of the TMP Steering Group  
Tuesday, 6 November 2007, 11.00am,  
Nobel House, London**

**Chair: British Trust for Ornithology**

**Those present**

Jessa Battersby (JNCC/TMP); Philip Briggs (BCT); Peter Brown (BRC/NBN); Caitriona Carlin (NE); Dave Cowan (CSL); Karen Haysom (BCT); David Jam (Deer Initiative); David Kenyon (BDS); Jean Matthews (CCW); John Milburne (EHS); Jim Munford (NBN Trust); Jill Nelson (PTES); Chris Newman (WildCRU); David Noble (BTO, Chair); Callum Rankine (The Mammal Society); Rob Raynor (SNH); Neil Reid (Quercus); Jonathan Reynolds (GCT); Nigel Sharp (Welsh Assembly Government); Pierre Tellier (JNCC, Minutes); Roger Trout (FC); David Wembridge (PTES).

**1. Apologies**

Elizabeth Barratt (Wildlife Trusts); Paul Bright (RHUL); Tony Dalby-Welsh (BDS); Ian Davidson-Watts (Defence Estates); Liz Halliwell (CCW); Julia Hanmer (BCT); David Macdonald (WildCRU); John Milburne (EHS); Ashley Matthews (Defra); Tim Russell (BASC); Richard Walmsley (EA).

**2. Welcome new members**

No organisations joined the TMP in the last year. However several organisations sent new representatives and they were welcomed including Peter Brown (BRC/NBN), David Jam (Deer Initiative), David Kenyon (British Deer Society), Callum Rankine (The Mammal Society) and Neil Reid (Quercus).

**3. Minutes of previous meeting (SG 4.5)**

These were agreed as an accurate summary of the meeting.

AP1. On the agenda

AP2 JNCC Report 'Ideas for a UK nature conservation framework' circulated at the meeting.

AP3 no comments received from group regarding JNCC surveillance strategy overview. Item on agenda.

AP4 Not carried out – on agenda

AP5 Not carried out- on agenda

**4. Review ToR for TMP and Steering Group (SG 5.2)**

It was agreed that the ToR should be amended to include the phrase “and distribution” in the definition of the concepts of surveillance and monitoring in the first paragraph.

It was noted that the terms of reference did not make any mention of data availability and that this should be changed.

**AP1 – JB to modify paragraph 2 of ToR to include the mention of “and distribution” alongside abundance.**

**AP2 – JB to add bullet point in the ToR to include reference to availability of data, while stipulating that there may be restrictions regarding the data itself.**

**AP3 – JB to circulate an updated ToR to group.**

**5. Co-ordinator's report SG5.3 (Tabled)**

JB provided a report on the work of the TMP coordinator from November 2006 to October 2007, including a summary of results and achievements for each of the surveillance schemes currently operating and updates on pilot schemes and funding issues (see document SC5.3 for details).

**6. Update on JNCC Surveillance strategy, including results of JNCC mammal surveillance review (JNCC 07 D01) – Jessa Battersby**

JB circulated the finalised paper "Mammal surveillance review and proposed way forward" that was presented to the Joint Committee in 2006, noting that this was a review carried out from JNCC's perspective and that the objectives, priorities and recommendations outlined in the paper were not necessarily those for other organisations in the TMP. The mammal surveillance review had highlighted aims to provide evidence on three main drivers:

- overall nature conservation outcome objectives (as these are established);
- showing the response of biodiversity to direct drivers (pressures) on the environment in order to help influence the indirect drivers;
- assessing the ongoing status of species covered by national, European and International obligations.

The table (appendix 1) at the end of the paper summarises the current surveillance coverage for mammals. A spreadsheet of information detailing how the conclusions on coverage and priorities were reached was not circulated with the paper but could be obtained from JB if required. JB noted that the recommendations of the review were very positive and that JNCC continued to support the main areas of involvement in the TMP. There would be some reduction in the coordinator role for JB with some aspects of the work being taken on by Pierre Tellier at JNCC.

JB informed the group that the newly formed surveillance team at JNCC was developing an overall UK surveillance strategy, building on the JNCC 'Draft strategy for surveillance reporting and research'. One of the drivers for this is the BAP priority review, which has produced a new and extended list of priority habitats and species and identified gaps in information. Work to date has involved refining the surveillance strategy, compiling a spreadsheet that inventories the current surveillance coverage for biodiversity in the UK, and producing a collated spreadsheet targeting BAP delivery, with recommended adjustments and costs for improving BAP coverage. There will be a consultation of stakeholder groups on the strategy, with the intention of sending a finalised approach to the BAP Standing Committee in April 2008. All organisations in the TMP will be involved.

JB noted that the financial climate was difficult at present and JNCC is looking to develop surveillance of other species groups with little current coverage and to improve habitats surveillance, but is unlikely to get additional funding to do this in the near future and so this exercise could involve rebalancing the existing funding for surveillance.

**7. Reporting results, progress with strategy (SG 5.6) - Jessa Battersby**

JB tabled a draft outline for a workshop to consider the future of mammal surveillance in the UK. A great deal of surveillance/monitoring information is available each year but policy makers are not fully aware of this or how the information can be best used. The workshop could address this through development of a reporting strategy as part of a more strategic approach to mammal surveillance. It was agreed that the TMP needs to discuss the size of the workshop and the presence of external attendees.

**AP4 – JB to send relevant information on past discussions concerning the workshop to TMP members.**

**AP5 – TMP group to send comments on the workshop by 14 December 2007**

**AP6 – JB to send revised draft outline with ideas for venue and dates to the TMP**

**8. Uses of Mammal Surveillance data - Jessa Battersby/Karen Haysom**

JB advised that TMP data had been very useful for assessing range and area parameters, as well as population trends, in the Habitats Directive Article 17 reporting on conservation status and mammals had been one of the best served groups in this regard. This had also been the case for the BAP priority species review. There is a general need for the TMP to expand data usage beyond surveillance to make best use of the work of TMP schemes.

KH provided some information on how data from the NBMP were being used including:

- Alert systems for Bat trends
- Distribution of species and links with drivers of change. Two projects: PhD comparing colony and field survey data and matching them to UK scale GIS set of criteria. First time this has been done at a UK scale. The other project is establishing models for predicting Daubenton's bat distribution
- Use of bats as biodiversity indicators by looking at work on birds and butterflies to include bats in the UK bioindicator suite. Link to wood, farmland, and urban habitat bat datasets.
- At a EU level, Eurobats meeting explored the possibility of using bats as bioindicators at a EU level for the SEBI 2010 reporting.

DN noted that it was advantageous to have more than one indicator measuring a particular environmental aspect because if two different indicators have concurring trends, it strengthens the single species indicators approach.

TMP and Europe: the main involvement is in bat monitoring through Eurobats at present. There is no European mammal organisation leading on surveillance issues for other mammals and there is an opportunity for the TMP to lead the development of mammal surveillance at a pan-European level.

- **Data request**

JB noted that the TMP was beginning to receive requests for collective data. Piran White at York University had requested access to the TMP data for mammals at a 10km square level for research purposes. JB advised that JNCC had compiled all the current information on distribution for the species listed on the Habitats Directive Annexes into one dataset at 10km square level and this could be provided initially. This led to the

issue of putting the FCS dataset on the NBN gateway and defining at which resolution these data could be accessed.

**AP 7 – JB to circulate the email request to TMP for comments.**

**AP 8 – JB to liaise with organisations that provided data for the conservation status assessments regarding supplying information to Piran White.**

## 9. **Data mobilisation issues – access through NBN – Jim Munford**

Jim Munford provided a briefing on developments with the NBN Gateway with particular reference to TMP use.

In 1995, 10% of organisations used computerised recordings and only 19% of the records were in a digital format. This raised several issues, such as the lack of common standards, the impossibility of easily assessing existing datasets and a general ignorance of authorship laws.

This led to the creation of the NBN Gateway, which was able to centralise display and access to data from diverse sources. The NBN trust has three roles:

- Providing the data exchange mechanism
- Proving legal advice
- Facilitation regarding data input and management

The facilitator role might be of most interest to TMP. Example of work: handbook on organising recording schemes (best practice) URL on website

The NBN Trust has a liaison group with existing National Societies and Schemes and TMP has representation on that group. [www.nbn.org.uk](http://www.nbn.org.uk) is both the website to the NBN Trust and the NBN Gateway data portal. NBN is moving from proof of existence to delivering an operational tool: development of web services to draw data from the NBN to put on an organisation's website.

The NBN Trust is involved in OPAL, an initiative led by Imperial College with £12 million HL funding to assist the development of volunteer sector biodiversity recording. The NBN aspect of the project has five years of funding to build the ability of the Gateway to hold attributed polygon habitat data, a facility which is missing at present.

NBN provides data to the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) and is currently the second largest provider. GBIF only takes publicly available data and there is no facility to provide different levels of access.

- **NBN services**

NBN shows logos and data provider name for datasets to maintain the profile of organisations NBN can provide data at a coarser resolution for the public to see, allowing the owner to retain finer resolution data. NBN can also reduce resolution for part of a dataset (i.e. sensitive protected species information). This precise data can be requested through the NBN for scientific purposes. Thus the owner of the data retains control over publication of the data. There is also the possibility for data owner to give time limited access to a selected number of people to review/quality assure the data.

One NBN facility is to provide peripheral data (i.e. BTO mammal data) when doing species searches. Being a database it grabs relevant info in every dataset it possesses. Hence the peripheral info comes out when doing a search. Same principle applies to the correlation between species distribution (i.e. predator/prey).

JM is willing to organise a demonstration of the NBN and the services it can provide. This could occur at the coming workshop. JM offered to provide the quarterly NBN newsletter to the TMP organisations.

**AP9 – JB to provide JM with contact addresses for TMP organisations for circulation of the quarterly newsletter**

**AP10 – Group to define what infrastructures would be useful to be developed by NBN to hold most data in a most sensible way and feedback to Jim Munford.**

**10. Habitat Action Plans - how can the requirements of mammal species be met? - Karen Haysom**

KH raised the issue of fitting the ongoing work on mammal species within the UK Biodiversity strategy which is focused on ensuring species conservation through appropriate habitat management.

CR indicated that one way of doing this is to have sufficient relevant data to clearly highlight the presence of a species in a given habitat to ensure the habitat management plans take into account the ecological requirements of the species.

KH informed the TMP group that there will be species-specific actions were the habitat action are deemed insufficient to ensure the conservation of species in those habitats.

JB indicated that it might be better to have action plans covering the wider countryside that encompass all mammal species present in a habitat rather than multiple specific action plans that may contradict one another.

**11. AOB**

**12. Date of next meeting – Chairperson**

The date of the next meeting will be **Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2008 at the MRC meeting rooms, Park Crescent, London.**

Chairperson **Central Science Laboratory (Dave Cowan)**