

# Global Biodiversity Sub-Committee (GBSC)

Meeting papers

## UK BRAG report

September 2008

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## **UK BRAG report to GBSC 1/09/08**

### **Knowledge Transfer/Influencing Strategy**

A paper was presented to the group providing suggestions for taking forward action to develop a forward plan for UK BRAG to undertake knowledge exchange and influencing. This is an important aspect of the future of the group since it offers a plan to take a substantial amount of the UK BRAG Review forward. The idea is to review and synthesise existing data to establish what is known about a particular area of biodiversity and what is unknown. The paper is being revised, following suggestions from discussion at the June meeting and will be presented as part of a work programme at the December UK BRAG meeting.

### **BiodivERsA project update**

Estelle Balian, Data Acquisition Manager for BiodivERsA, gave a presentation on the BiodivERsA database. The database aims to provide web-based access to funding opportunities for biodiversity research across Europe. This includes thematic and blue skies programmes, calls or programmes for stand alone projects, and studentships and fellowships. The database was launched at the EPBRS meeting in Leipzig, May 2007 and can be viewed at <http://rivendell.vub.ac.be/biodiversa/>. The database contains information at the funding programme level from non-BiodivERsA partner funders such as BBSRC. The next phase will be to include information at the project level for BiodivERsA partners such as NERC. UK BRAG noted the usefulness of this resource, made the links between this and the ERFF database on environmental research and agreed to check that the database includes comprehensive information on biodiversity research programmes including logistical contact details.

### **UK BRAG collaboration with the British Ecological Society**

UK BRAG is holding a joint special session with the BES on Ecosystem Services at the 2008 BES annual meeting. This will take place on Thursday 4 September at Imperial College London from 2.00-5.00pm. The session is chaired by Prof Georgina Mace and speakers include Prof Alastair Fitter, Prof Ed Maltby and Dr Peter Cositgan. The programme offers a chance to learn about Defra's work in considering whole ecosystems in policy development as well as finding out about current research into ecosystem services across both the terrestrial and marine environment. BRAG noted this as an opportunity to engage with the research community and take forward useful and influential thinking.

### **Update on NERC's biodiversity theme action plan**

Lloyd Peck, NERC's Biodiversity Theme Leader, gave a presentation to update members on NERC's Biodiversity Theme Action Plan.

### **EPBRS update**

The next theme to be considered at EPBRS is biodiversity and business and this will be discussed at the Paris meeting, 17-21 November. Issues will include impact evaluation, indications, mitigation, ecological engineering, integrating biodiversity in company strategies and experience from industry. This is a new area for EPBRS and they will need to consider tools of evaluation, economics and behaviour.

Andy Stott noted that there is an opportunity for the UK to host a meeting of the EPBRS subgroup which will reflect on the strategic direction of the EPBRS. This will be a one day workshop and UK BRAG could help shape it by considering what the objectives are, who it

should be for, the timescale and what to include, for example the role of EPBRS in developing the science to policy interface in Europe, defining its niche and role in relation to other initiatives.

### **Reports from UK BRAG sub-groups**

Reports from two sub-groups were presented and discussed: Marine biodiversity goods and services and policy benefits from research. The marine sub-group are keen to publish the results of their paper and are considering which would be the most appropriate publications before making the report available on the UK BRAG website.

The sub-group on policy relevant use of research requested more support from BRAG members since they required a greater pool of expertise to take the work forward. They will look to build on the ERF recommendations and make the report specific to biodiversity work.

GBSC Secretariat 28/08/08