

UK PROGRAMME BOARD FOR NON-NATIVE SPECIES

FIFTH MEETING

VIRTUAL

24 APRIL 2023, 12:30 – 14:00

APPROVED MINUTES

1. Attendance / apologies

Present:

- Richard Pullen (Defra) – *Chair*
- Niall Moore (NNSS) - Secretary
- Matthew Bird (Scottish Government)
- Olaf Booy (NNSS)
- Finn Eaton (Defra)
- Leasa Fielding (Welsh Government)
- Chris Graham (MMO)
- Richard Gray (DAERA – NI)
- Iain Henderson (APHA) [Items 1 – 4 only]
- Rebecca Isted (FC)
- Theresa Kudelska (NRW)
- Jo Long (SEPA)
- Bill MacDonald (Welsh Government)
- Gavin Measures (NE)
- Mark Preston (DAERA – NI)
- Trevor Renals (Environment Agency)
- Toni Scarr (Environment Agency)
- Jenny Stewart (APHA)
- Hannah Tidbury (Cefas) [on behalf of Defra Marine]
- Stan Whitaker (NatureScot)

Apologies:

- Colin Edwards (Scottish Forestry)
- Sarah Errington (MMO)
- Vanessa Fairbank (Defra – Marine)
- Nicholas Greenwood (MMO)
- Lisa McCann (Scottish Government)
- Peter Pollard (SEPA – replaced by Jo Long)
- Dave Rowlands (MMO)
- Nicola Spence (Defra, Plant Health)
- Des Thompson (NatureScot) – replaced by Stan Whitaker
- Sarah Wood (NRW)

2. Minutes of meeting on 4 October 2022

Paper circulated (PB Apr 23-02)

The minutes were signed off with no modifications.

3. Actions / matters arising

Paper circulated (PB Apr 23-03)

All actions were discharged, apart from action 1, which is ongoing:

- Action 1. Inspectorate to continue to meet with government agencies individually after which it will arrange a workshop with multiple agencies to discuss its work – before the next Board meeting.

4. Inspectorate update

Paper circulated (PB Apr 23-04)

Niall introduced this paper with assistance from Iain and Olaf. The Board strongly welcomed the report, especially the statistics and metrics included. They noted the high levels of non-compliance that have been detected and that much of this is to do with ignorance among key sectors. They noted that the report provides useful information to support future SR bids.

The Board provided specific comments to consider in future, as follows:

- Sections on training, SOPs and ways of working were welcomed. It would be useful to provide a list of training that will be provided and timing around when inspectors will receive this. Similarly, a list of SOPs would be useful and plans for their development. As ways of working develop it will be important to ensure appropriate systems are in place to support this.
- It would be useful to further clarify the role of the NNSI in rapid response.
- Further links between the NNSI and GB Strategy should be made, including links to PAP actions.
- More thinking will be required in future about the NNSI's involvement in enforcement and prosecutions.
- It would be useful to publish the report, or a summary of its findings – the Board agreed that this would need to be considered further.

5. GB INNS Strategy update

Finn led on this item, noting that the GB Strategy was published in late February. Defra is considering how to progress with the implementation plan, in collaboration with Welsh Government, Scottish Government and the NNSI. This will include links to other plans, such as the Environmental Improvement Plan in England, the Biological Security Strategy and the Plan for Water. In Scotland, invasive species

are a priority in the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy which is progressing and will be linked to the GB Strategy.

A draft of the completed implementation plan will be presented to the next Board meeting in October 2023.

ACTION 1. Defra, with support from **WG, SG** and **NNSS**, to draft the implementation plan for presentation to the Board at the October 2023 meeting.

6. Stakeholder Forum

Niall led on this item, seeking ideas for the stakeholder forum on 21 June in Llandudno. The Board agreed that it would be useful to have presentations from (i) the Dee invasive species group and (ii) island biosecurity and the use of sniffer dogs. It would also be a useful opportunity to gather views and ideas for the GB Strategy implementation plan.

ACTION 2. All to suggest ideas for the stakeholder forum – talks and breakout sessions – to NNSS by May 19.

7. Pathway Action Plan update

The public consultation on PAPs continues to be delayed while Defra await word from the SoS and this is now likely to be affected by purdah. Currently there is no timeline for starting the consultation. Colleagues in Northern Ireland intend to run their consultation in parallel with that in GB and will be seeking high level clearance for this.

8. Rapid Responses

Niall updated the Board on the establishment of the Rapid Response Working Group which had its first meeting on April 12 and is being chaired by Jo Long (SEPA). The main aim of the group is to substantially improve the number and speed of rapid responses.

There were no exceptions related to ongoing rapid responses to report. Updates from some agencies are at Annex 1.

9. Secretariat Report

Paper circulated PB Apr 23-09

Niall led on this paper – highlighting key points, including the British Irish Council workshop taking place in May 2023 – the first since 2020.

10. AOB

Stan circulated information about biosecurity guidance that is being developed for the World Cycling Championship:

- A One Health approach to biosecurity guidance: NatureScot, Scottish Forestry, IUCN and the Union Cycliste Internationale have collaborated on biosecurity guidance for the World Cycling Championships, which will also be used by the Extreme E off-road rally. NatureScot has produced biosecurity guidance to reduce the risk of INNS and bird diseases spreading to offshore seabird islands. The above campaigns are based around the Keep it Clean campaign for tree diseases, and South Georgia's Check, Clean, Dip and Dry messaging. The Centre of Expertise in Plant Health published last month a review of biosecurity practices to support plant health in Scotland, which recommends more coordinated biosecurity messaging across different sectors and incorporating these into relevant countryside codes.

11. Date of next meeting

The NNSS will seek dates in October. Northern Ireland will be in the chair.

ANNEX 1 – RAPID RESPONSE UPDATES FROM AGENCIES

SEPA

Pink Salmon – eDNA surveillance will be carried out on 30 rivers across Scotland to get a clearer understanding of the distribution of arrivals.

Crangonyx floridanus – monitoring will be carried out in the lower end of the Spean system to help understand the distribution of this species. No specific impacts have been observed to date.

NatureScot

Purple pitcher plant – final surveillance check is due to be carried out in May 2023.

Floating Pennywort – site on Moray will continue to be monitored in 2023.

Mammals on islands

- Lothian Kayak Club removed a brown rat from the Lamb (off North Berwick) in winter 2021/22.
- Surveillance checks on Barra (hedgehog) and Swona (rodents) in 2022 both negative.

Kookaburra - Mar-23 reports of free-flying birds in Kirkcudbright. Inspectorate to investigate.

NRW

Topmouth gudgeon - eradication is funded by Welsh Government in Wales and is being undertaken by NRW in partnership with Carmarthenshire County Council. The eradication is also supported by the Environment Agency. An eradication was due to take place at two sites near Llanelli in South Wales between the 24-26 Jan 2023. However issues with retaining water and water levels during pump down at the respective sites caused eradication efforts to be halted. Further eradication work is planned for 2023-2025.