

**Upland Ecosystem Group**  
**7<sup>th</sup> July 2011**

**Present:** Charles Morgan PONT (Chair), Julia Korn Secretariat (CCW) Joe Daggart NT, Steve Chambers (WG), Jan Sherry (CCW), Peter Jones (CCW), Sian Whitehead (CCW), Dave Lamacraft (RSPB), Bev Lewis (WTWs), Mike Jenkins (EAW), Clive Faulkner (WTWs/WG), Gareth Ellis (BBNP/LBAPs), Dafydd Roberts (SNPA)

**Apologies:** Reg Thorpe (RSPB), Chris Tucker (FCW), Helen Buckingham NT

**Environment Wales Applications 2011/12**

**Peatland Restoration in BBNP using wool**

Last year this project successfully engaged people and increased interest in the habitat and the damage caused by erosion. The input of the Upland group brings an element of science to the project. There is potential to expand the project to include re-establishment of Eriophorum by encouraging local people to grow from seed at home and donate to the project.

One of the major costs is the requirement to clean the wool and currently there is no information of potential impact (or not) of wool on the environment.

**DECISION**

The group agreed to this project being submitted if the re-establishment of Eriophorum is built in to the application

**ACTIONS**

- **GE to work with Pip to develop and submit an application. The project must be delivered by March 31<sup>st</sup> 2012**
- **MJ to investigate issues around the use of wool in the project, and whether it has to be cleaned or not.**
- **DL/GE to discuss any potential golden plover issues? – turns out it is the Black Mountains with the plovers after all**

Other potential projects include the Rhododendron Project in Snowdonia National Park, Abergwesyn, Migneint and the Berwyn

**ACTIONS**

- **JK to check with Clare at Environment Wales (EW) if applications can go to the Chairs after the closing date.** *Done and yes applications will be sent to EG chairs after the deadline and they will have an approx 10 day window in which to forward comments. For the next grant round EW would need comments by 10 August.*
- **JK to check with EW whether projects have to be delivered by March 31<sup>st</sup> 2012, or whether it is just that money has to be spent by then.** *Done - 'All activities funded under the Biodiversity Grant Fund must take place in Wales and be completed before 31 March 2012.'*
- **All to look at projects that broadly fit with priorities and submit**
- **JK to ask EW if once organisations have submitted an application with associated policies whether the policies are kept on record.** *Done - EW keep all policies/constitutions/background info on projects that complete the Environment Wales registration process. EW encourage all eligible applicant*

groups to register with us (this also allows access to other Environment Wales grants). EW don't keep documents for non-registered applicants; supporting information is returned to them.

- **JK to ask EW if all applications can be sent in electronically.** Done - EW trialled accepting emailed applications to this Fund last year and found it unworkable. However as the forms are scanned in by EW office this should not impact on any of the EG's time.
- **All to explore ways of communicating about the Upland Ecosystem group priorities to other partners who may be able to submit applications e.g. LBAP partnerships**

### **Feedback on the Biodiversity Fund**

- Limited numbers of organisations able to put applications in the Uplands. Would be useful if local authorities and national parks could submit applications on behalf of the LBAP Partnership
- Still having difficulties meeting the criteria for biodiversity projects
- Would like to extend the maximum bid to £30,000
- Timing is an issue. Most biodiversity work is undertaken in spring/summer so an April start date would be better.
- Sustainability of projects – a long term view is very beneficial and funding that extended beyond one year would be helpful e.g. 3 year projects (as was the case for the old Species Challenge Fund)

### **ACTION**

- **JK to bid for money for the Environment Wales Biodiversity Fund on PBC (CCW)**
- **JK to discuss all issues raised with Clare as part of a review of the fund, if successful in bidding for funds.**

### **Priority mapping**

**Level 1** – All habitat (phase 1/connectivity) etc

**Level 2** – Priority habitat – plot SSSIs, select 5 functional networks etc plus 2<sup>nd</sup> tier sites

**Level 3** – Priority actions for Upland, lowland grassland and heathland, coastal, lowland wetland, enclosed farmland and urban ecosystem groups

### **Consultation**

The priority action maps went out to consultation with CCW regions and LBAP partnerships in May/June. Upland comments summarised below:

1. Possibly include sitka covered deep peat in Neath Port Talbot /West Glamorgan as there is huge development pressure from wind farms.

#### **DECISION?TBC**

2. Consideration generally where there is intense pressure on habitat

**DECISION:** -Include Tuaman Plateau in Montgomeryshire RSPB to do

3. Questions over the criteria for choosing priorities e.g. should the Powys Peatland project be included?

**DECISION:** -Include Cantref Reservoir (PJ)

4. Migneint should be considered, and also Elenydd should be extended to include the Golden Plover?

**DECISIONS:** - Elenydd should be expanded by DL/JD/PJ

- Include Migneint but specific projects need to be written up and mapped by

HB

5. Expanding the project area "Mynydd Du peatlands" to be wider and include some other parts of the central Beacons and rename the project area as "Brecon Beacons peatlands" or similar.

**DECISION?**TBC

### **Priority action lists**

It was agreed that only one list should be kept bringing together the priority and second tier action priorities for level 3 maps. All areas need to have specific projects within them, and a named person responsible for the producing the spec and the maps. Most of the current priority maps are complete, the 2 outstanding are:

- **Hiraethog Maps – DL**
- **Twite maps - DL**
- **Berwyn SAC trees/black grouse – RT**

**The deadline for these September 2<sup>nd</sup> , and for maps and specs for additional priority actions agreed today it is September 31<sup>st</sup>**

### **General points**

Level 2 maps identify priority habitat, these can be referenced for decisions, funding applications a etc.

Interpretation and communication for the maps will be important part of work. Will need to state clearly which species are not included, widespread habitats also a problem e.g. hedgerows, ponds etc.

The maps are part of the NEF GIS workstream activity and will be used to support cross-sector decision making e.g. the NEF Bridgend case study.

### **ACTIONS**

- **JK/JS to work raise status of this project within CCW, and bid for resources on PBS**
- **JK to raise importance of organisational ‘buy in’ at the WBP SG meeting on July 12<sup>th</sup> Done**
- **JS to spend a day with the RSPB to look at maps for Upland birds (after the publication of the important bird area maps)**

### **Upland Framework**

Once the Upland level 3 maps are complete there is a need to look at how these fit with the Upland framework. In addition the Forestry Commission have a project prioritising bog restoration post felling which should also be included in an Upland framework review. Upland acid grassland need to be included – Alex Turner (CCW) has expertise in this field.

### **LBAP partnerships**

Two visits were agreed: one in South/mid Wales and one in the North.

### **ACTIONS**

- **GE to lead on arranging the meeting in South and mid Wales. JD offered a venue that can take 30 people. PJ, JS, CM,JD, RSPB and GE all offered to attend.**

- **PJ to lead on organising a venue for the North Wales meeting (Llyn Brenig visitor centre) and JK to help organise meeting. PJ, JS, CM and RSPB offered to attend.**

### **Future of BAP Update**

Tasked with reviewing the Wales Biodiversity Framework including the terms of reference for the various groups involved in WBP. Information available on the WBP website.

### **Glastir Targeted Element**

#### **ACTIONS**

- **CM to write to the Welsh Government on behalf of the Upland EG seeking clarification on the relationship between entry level and higher level scheme.**
- **CM to circulate the Higher Level Scheme prescriptions and All to provide comments via CM ASAP**
- **CM to ask WG for latest commons prescriptions**

### **AoB**

1. There is a need to review the Upland action plans in light of the priorities

#### **ACTION**

- **PJ, JS, JK and CM to lead on reviewing the action plans**

2. Species and habitat integration work involves looking at habitats and niches along the lines of similar work carried out by natural England.

#### **ACTION**

- **Upland group to take this forward**
- **SB to organise second integration meeting and also include the Wetland habitats.**

3. The Powys Peat Project is being developed by the Powys Peat Network Chaired by Mont Wildlife Trusts. A meeting has been held with local graziers who support the project. An application will be made to the LIFE Biodiversity Fund and will be submitted next year..

#### **ACTION**

- **PJ to circulate notes on the Powys peat Project.**

### **3 Key Messages** *(Please adapt to make meaningful to your networks)*

- **Seeking new partners to submit Upland applications for the Environment Wales fund in the future**
- **The Upland EG plan to hold 2 meeting with LBAP Partnerships in the autumn. Details will be available soon**
- **There is concern over the relationship between the Glastir Entry Level and Higher Level scheme and the Upland EG is seeking clarification.**

**Next meeting Newtown 13<sup>th</sup> October**