

Meeting Actions



Partneriaeth **Bioamrywiaeth** Cymru
Wales **Biodiversity** Partnership

Title of meeting: **WBP Invasive Non-native Species Group**

Date of meeting: 4th October 2023 **Venue:** MS Teams

Time of meeting: 10.00 – 12.30

Present: **WG:** Leasa Fielding (Chair), Alison Smith, Karen Stothard, Tom Warren
WBP: Michaela Scrivin (secretariat)
Other: Beverley Lewis (BBNPA), Colin Russell (LERC Rep), David Jermyn (BBNPA), Dawn Thomas (NWWT), Debbie Murphy (CEFAS), Gareth Bowen (Bridgend CC), Jennie Jones (NRW), Judith Oakley (Swansea CC), Katie Havard-Smith (Cardiff Uni), Laura Grant (NRW), Laura Jones (TfW), Maggie Gill (APHA), Matt Tebbitt (Stitch in Time), Olaf Booy (APHA), Theresa Kudelska (NRW), Sean Hathaway (Swansea CC),

Apologies: Kirsty Brown (NWWT), Louis Macdonald-Ames (Wye & Usk), Niall Moore (GBNNS), Simon Roberts (RSPB), Tomos Jones (WaREN)

[Producing a cross-border Biosecurity Plan for the Severn Estuary](#)
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ACTIONS OVERVIEW

Action	Lead	Timeframe	Update
Producing a cross-border Biosecurity Plan for the Severn Estuary 1. No actions arising.			
INNS and developing biodiversity targets 2. No actions arising.			
Asian Hornet activity in England this year 3. No actions arising.			
Partner updates 4. Anyone who hadn't managed to send a partner update to Michaela ahead	ALL		



Action	Lead	Timeframe	Update
of the meeting please send one by the end of October			
Any Other Business / Next steps 5. Michaela to organise next meeting for March 2024.	Michaela		

KEY POINTS & ACTIONS

Leasa Fielding welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted apologies. The list of actions from the last meeting was reviewed:

List of actions from March 2023 meeting

1. Partner updates: Any outstanding partner updates to Michaela by March 22nd.
Done
2. All to send INNS Week plans to Tom Warren. **Done**
3. Michaela to organise next meeting for autumn 2023. **Done**

Producing a cross-border Biosecurity Plan for the Severn Estuary

Katie Havard-Smith from the Severn Estuary Partnership gave a short presentation about this stakeholder-led project, which will result in a live interactive biosecurity plan for the Estuary hosted on the Severn Estuary Partnership website. This project is funded by NRW and Natural England, and is currently focused on stakeholder mapping and workshop planning. Face-to-face stakeholder workshops will be held in Cardiff and Bristol in November, followed by one-to-one interviews with stakeholders unable to attend the meeting. Follow-up workshops will be held in the spring to report on potential future actions, and agree resources.

INNS and developing biodiversity targets

Karen Stothard gave a presentation on the WG commitment to deliver, in this Senedd term, legislation to establish an environmental governance body for Wales and to introduce a statutory duty and targets to protect and restore biodiversity. The Biodiversity Deep Dive ([Written Statement: Biodiversity Deep Dive \(3 October 2022\) | GOV.WALES](#)) also recognised the need for these nature targets to be focussed on achieving environmental outcomes and delivering Wales's contribution to the Kunming-Montreal global biodiversity framework ("the GBF").

The Bill will introduce a biodiversity target setting framework which will grant the Welsh Ministers power to amend existing targets and/or create new targets to address the biodiversity crisis. The Biodiversity Targets Framework will comprise:-

- A headline target aimed at driving ambition and actions to reverse the decline of biodiversity.
- Framework of targets will be based around the GBF to reflect the ecosystems approach outlined in our existing legislation and biodiversity priorities in Wales. Initial thinking on potential targets includes those based around species (abundance) and habitat (restoration, protection) subject to further analysis.



- Monitoring and reporting - The Bill will need to set out future requirements for monitoring (including supporting indicators), reporting of the target framework.

Karen then gave a brief overview of the Kunming Montreal GBF, below, and noted that INNS were specifically referred to in Target 6.

Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework Convention on Biological Diversity

Vision

2050 - *"By 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people."*

Mission

2030 - *'To take urgent action to halt and reverse biodiversity loss to put nature on a path to recovery for the benefit of people and planet by conserving and sustainably using biodiversity and by ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of genetic resources, while providing the necessary means of implementation'*

Wales and other signatories will be responsible for developing **updated National Biodiversity Action Plan** to help deliver targets.

Strengthen planning, monitoring and reporting - **Monitoring and reporting framework** with set of headline, component and complementary indicators

4 long term goals for 2050

A – Biodiversity

B – Sustainable use

C- Benefits sharing

D - Resource Mobilisation/implementation

23 action oriented global targets for urgent action to 2030

Targets 1-8 - *Reducing threats to biodiversity*

Targets 9-13 - *Meeting people's needs through sustainable use and benefit-sharing*

Targets 14-23 - *Tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming*

The GBF was then set within the context of biodiversity and legislative framework in Wales, with reference to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, the Nature Recovery Action Plan, The Environment Wales Act, and SoNARR among others.

Recommendations for setting Welsh targets included:

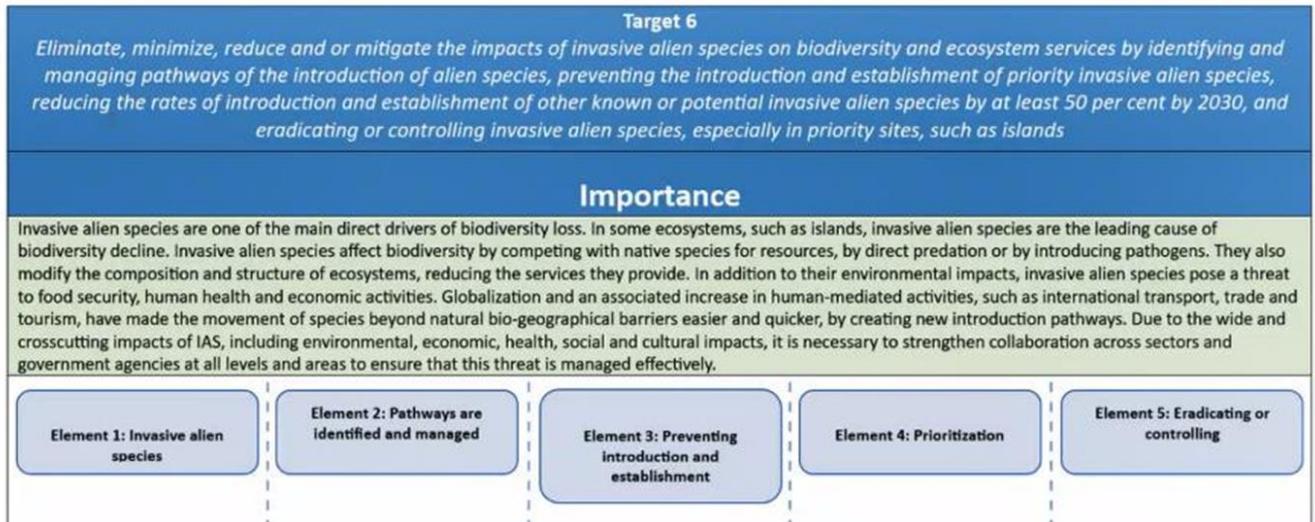
- A headline target of 'Nature Positive by 2030' with a full nature recovery by 2050
- Identifying gaps, by mapping exiting targets, recommendations and goals across the Welsh political landscape against the GBF targets to assess where these are already being partially addressed and where there may be gaps which may need targets to be written.
- 30 by 30
- Target inspiration, e.g. Environment Act targets for biodiversity in England such as species abundance, species extinction risk, wider habitat creation / restoration, and 70% of the designated features in the MPA network to be in favourable condition by 2042, with the remainder in recovering condition, and additional reporting on changes in individual feature condition.

Targets must address the key problems in Wales. SoNaRR 2020 has already pulled out many of the key issues in Wales, and should be taken advantage of when action planning and designing targets

Karen then looked at the wording of Target 6, and noted it was being mapped across to national wellbeing indicators and key Welsh legislation, strategy and policy drivers. She asked the group about what kind of targets they would like to see introduced in secondary legislation, noting that proper consultation will take place



later in the process so looking at overall targets and open ended questions to consider further at this stage.



- Olaf Booy asked whether target 6 would be a priority to take forward, and Karen noted the priorities would be set in collaboration with stakeholders and policy colleagues. There is a target at UK level already, and Karen wanted to understand whether there was a need for an additional target at a Welsh level. How aligned is the UK target with the GBF? Olaf responded that the UK target was measurable for the first time, which he saw as really valuable for measuring progress, and that he felt the current target could be applied at a country administration level as well as at the UK level.
- Leasa Feilding noted the GB strategy is to reduce INNS by 50% compared to 2000 levels, but that is only achieved via cross-government work on the implementation plan and partnership working to deliver. Good structures on place via the GB secretariat.
- Olaf noted the target is not currently statutory, which would be a substantial change.
- Bev Lewis asked about the breakdowns against each target – carrot versus stick. Karen responded that the Wales framework is not at that stage yet, but gave links to the general Kunming Montreal targets: [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework \(cbd.int\)](https://www.cbd.int/framework) with a specific link to Target 6: [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](https://www.cbd.int/framework/target6) Bev asked about the consultation process, Karen responded that WG is currently developing a white paper, which will go out to consultation in 2024, but would like input into the process now too.
- Theresa Kudelska noted the GBF target is quite complex, and felt that a lot more definition was needed in order for practitioners to understand what they were measuring against and what success would look like. Karen noted the GBF targets were a broad product of negotiation between 190 countries, so need to be made specific and relevant to the UK / Wales.
- Leasa and Karen noted there was work ongoing with technical bodies (e.g. RTG) to look at the indicators and how they will be measured, so more clarity will be provided once their findings are released.
- Olaf noted there will be a need for forward focus on species that could potentially become invasive and preventing their establishment, as well as control and eradication of INNS currently in the UK, and felt that could translate to UK and



national levels. Can't rely on international discussion of indicators, currently having those conversations at UK level too.

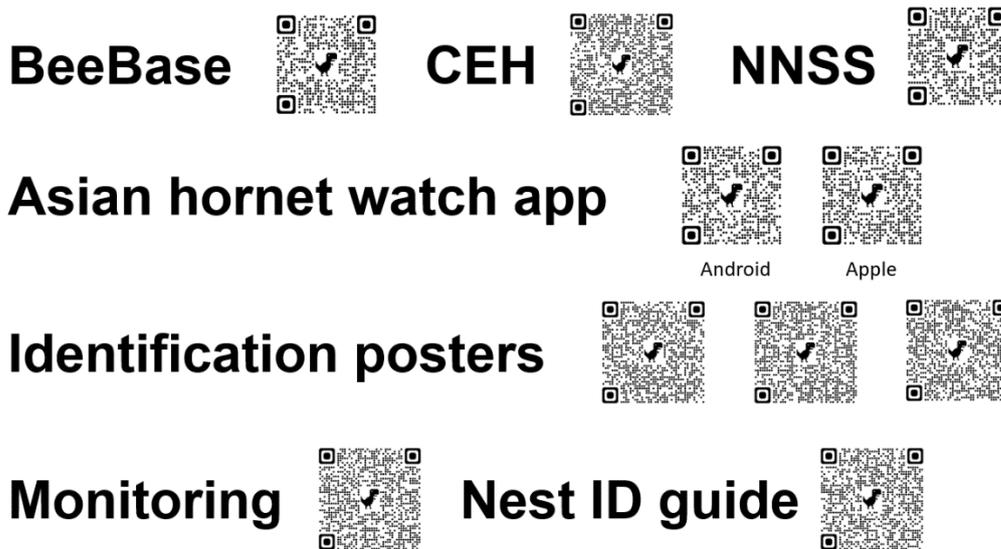
- Alison Smith asked if timescales were going to be an issue if the White Paper needed to be introduced this plenary, and the international discussions were still ongoing. Karen noted that the White Paper would introduce the powers to set targets, but the targets themselves will be set in secondary legislation. Welsh targets will feed into the UK level, which is required to be done and published by May 2024, before October's COP 16. Karen noted there needs to be a refresh of the Nature Recovery Action Plan to reflect what is being done at a Welsh level. JNCC co-ordinating a lot of this work to find common ground.
- Leasa confirmed it will still be 'INNS' not 'invasive alien species'
- Olaf noted that INNS sometimes seem to drop off the radar in biodiversity discussions and need to be prioritised as a threat that has a manageable solution given collaborative approach. Karen responded that aim is to identify common areas where we can work together effectively, and INNS are prime candidates.
- Alison noted the economic impacts of INNS on developments and priority sites – Karen and Alison to work together on the impact assessment to cost-benefit analysis on the White Paper to capture that. Olaf also has updated economic information, linked here: <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10530-023-03107-2> , cost estimate in that was around £1.8 billion per year.
- Karen to liaise further with Leasa during development stage

Asian Hornet activity in England this year

Maggie Gill gave the group an update on Asian Hornet activity in England this year. Maggie gave an overview of how Asian Hornets reached the UK, and why they are a problematic species in Europe. In the UK, queens emerge in the spring and construct a primary nest in April-May, secondary nests are then built in June-August. Queens mate in September-October and hibernate over winter.

13 nests found in 2022, currently 60 nests found so far in 2023. Predominantly in Kent, but as far away as North Yorkshire and Cornwall. Nests found three months earlier than previous years. Reports of Asian Hornets are looked at by volunteers in the first instance with bait stations deployed in the area, but as soon as credible report received APHA team deploy, destroy the nest, and do genetic analysis to assess whether the nest has produced drones and new queens, and whether nests are related.

Maggie noted the biggest problem was the lack of public awareness, with people not realising the nests belong to an INNS and can be removed for free. She asked for everyone to raise awareness in their communities and noted the resources available here: [Asian Hornet » NNSS \(nonnativespecies.org\)](https://www.nonnativespecies.org/). Welsh ID sheets and alert posters are also available on the GBNNSS website. QR codes to resources are shown below:



- Bev Lewis asked why numbers have increased so dramatically – Maggie noted the weather has been ideal for wasps, bees and hornets.
- Sean Hathaway asked about habitats nests were most likely to be found in. Maggie said more than 75% of nests are up tall trees, but those trees can be in schools, forests, middle of town – anywhere.
- Olaf and Maggie noted none have been found in Wales so far, but it's likely that they are here but not being reported.

Partner Updates

- Written updates circulated before the meeting, and will be recirculated with these minutes.
- **GBNNSS:** Olaf noted that UK and GB meetings are at the end of October, and that a conversation is going on about what new species should be added to the list of special concern. None are expected at this stage as the process is ongoing, but committee has already agreed on the delisting of certain species. This will happen once the relevant legislation is put in place. Two populations of greater white toothed shrew found in the north of England, work underway to tackle that along with purple pitcher plant. IPBES (Intergovernmental Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services) have published an international assessment of invasive species impacts and their control, including ideas on how governments, stakeholders, private industry and others can work together to try and tackle species.
- **Bridgend CC:** Gareth Bowen noted the council was hoping to map INNS on council assets, enabling firstly a good overview of all INNS county-wide which would then feed into a priority action plan for treatment across the county.
- **Transport for Wales:** Laura Jones noted TfW continue to manage invasives across the Coal Valley Lines Network, 220 km of tracks under long term management. Increasing number of claim from residents in relation to knotweed, as a result of this some historical mapping done which should result in publishing a technical paper alongside a couple of universities looking at the historical spread of Knotweed in relation to transport and railway infrastructure in particular. Also



developing an interim strategy for net benefits biodiversity for TFW, which will include parameters for invasives as part of the KPIs.

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Actions: Anyone who hadn't managed to send a partner update to Michaela ahead of the meeting please send one by end of October and this can be included with the minutes when circulated.

Any Other Business

- WaREN funding: SMS funding finished June 2023, WG has provided interim funding until end of March 2024, to give them time to develop further funding bids.
- INNS and pets: Potential new pathway action plan for GB based on an ongoing campaign in Northern Ireland. Pets may predate on native wildlife, compete with native plants and animals for resources, and introduce and spread diseases. Increase in the number of exotic pets entering GB, which do have the potential to become invasive if they are released or if they escape into the natural environment. Be Pet Wise targets pet owners and pet traders, ensuring they are responsible with pet species by adopting some simple measures to prevent species from becoming invasive, and in the case of traders actively encouraging others to take appropriate action. Potentially looking to the sector to run a pathway action plan group to develop that plan and invite interested parties. Be Pet Wise leaflet - [BePetWise-Leaflet_V1_2023.pdf \(invasives.ie\)](#)
Be Pet Wise homepage - [Be Pet Wise - Invasives.ie](#)
- Leasa flagged the WG update that they are looking to consult on an update to the species control provisions code of practice, expecting it to go out before the end of the year.
- Next WBP INNS meeting to be organised for March 2024.

Action: Michaela to organise next meeting for March 2024.