

SBIF Review of the Biological Recording Infrastructure in Scotland

Highlight Report



SPONSORS	SBIF Advisory Group
CIRCULATION LIST	SBIF Advisory Group, SBIF Working Group, Ed Mackey, Roddy Fairley
DATE	01 February 2018 (covering December 2017 and January 2018)
AUTHOR	Ellen Wilson
FREQUENCY	Monthly
OVERALL RAG STATUS	Red (help needed to understand decision-making steps and to form our advocacy plan)

Latest Update

Following on from our fourth and final workshop (on **Funding** options) in December, activity in January has involved Scottish LERC and SBIF Advisory Group meetings to progress development of options within our **Detailed Business Case**. The Workshops have been a great success - thank you to all involved for the hard work and energy put in! Key messages from **Workshop 4** were that we must work together at every level and across the UK to remove competition for funds and share costs across sectors while joining up data for maximum benefit; that we should make a bold request for funding sufficient to support our desired governance structure and for change to be significant and worthwhile; and that we should adopt a subscription model to charge for academic or commercial use of data, and/or that the biological recording infrastructure should be defined as a beneficiary of environmental taxation. The SBIF Advisory Group next meets on the 15th March to sign off the final **Recommendations** of the Review. After March, the Review closes and a new phase of work will develop an **Advocacy Plan** to inform and support decision-makers and other key stakeholders. Details of the Review and all highlight reports and approved papers are shared publicly (see <https://nbn.org.uk/about-us/where-we-are/in-scotland/the-SBIF-review/>). Follow [@sb_info_forum](#) on Twitter for informal news on **#SBIFReview**.

Overview

Our vision for the Review is that it determines the optimum infrastructure for biological recording in Scotland, an infrastructure that in turn will attract the necessary belief, commitment and investment by stakeholders to be sustainable and successful in fulfilling the original vision of SBIF:















High quality species and habitat data will be collected and managed through a sustainable, co-ordinated and integrated local and national framework of organisations, partnerships and initiatives. These data will be available to ensure that Scotland's biodiversity, ecosystems and people benefit.

The Review will do this in such a way as to be cohesive across Scotland with support from all stakeholders and the willingness and energy to then make the transitions necessary to implement the new infrastructure by 2020.

Our objectives are:

- To build the energy and confidence of key stakeholders in the potential for an improved infrastructure that delivers the original vision of SBIF (above).
- To establish a register of all operational recording schemes and their operators so that data flows in Scotland are well-understood.
- To establish what funding and other income sources sustain the current infrastructure and what sources may continue to be available, or become available, in future.
- To hold stakeholder interviews to gain their current perspectives and to consult stakeholders on the infrastructure that they and their sector would need to meet their requirements.
- To run stakeholder workshops to identify the options for how these needs could best be fulfilled centrally, nationally and locally, and to evaluate these options in order to identify the preferred one(s).
- To identify where improved use of technology can help reduce duplication of effort and increase the efficiency of the biological recording infrastructure (so that data are made available for use and re-use).
- To identify what transition arrangements would be necessary to implement the preferred option(s).

Stages and Milestones

STAGE/MILESTONE	DUE/DONE	STATUS	NOTES/RISKS/ISSUES
STAGE 1: Set up the Working Group and complete planning for the Review (August 2016)			
Paper 1 (Brief for the Review) approved	05 September 2016	Complete	
Paper 2 (high level plan for Stage 2) approved	05 September 2016	Complete	
Working Group meetings established	16 September 2016	Complete	
Logistics confirmed for Stage 2	28 February 2017	Complete	
STAGE 2: Gather perspectives, requirements and other information from key stakeholders (September 2016 to July 2017)			
Paper 2 (high level plan for Stage 2) approved	30 November 2016	Complete	
Questionnaire design completed	28 February 2017	Complete	
Interviews with Stage 2 consultees completed	10 March 2017	Complete	
Background data gathering completed	15 May 2017	Complete	
Logistics confirmed for Stage 3	21 June 2017	Complete	
Analysis of questionnaire + interviews completed	20 August 2017	Complete	
Paper 3 (high level business case) completed	4 December 2017	Complete	Focus now transferred to the Detailed Business Case
STAGE 3: Hold workshops to find and evaluate options at central, national and local levels (July 2018 to March 2018)			
Paper 2 (high level plan for Stage 3) approved	21 June 2017	Complete	
Workshops with Stage 3 consultees completed	15 December 2017	Complete	
 Paper 3 (detailed business case) approved	15 March 2018	In progress	Sign-off at the SBIF Advisory Group meeting in March
STAGE 4: Issue recommendations and plan their implementation (March 2018 to March 2019)			
 Paper 4 (Review Recommendations) approved	15 March 2018	In progress	Sign-off at the SBIF Advisory Group meeting in March
 Paper 5 (Advocacy Plan) approved	May 2018	In progress	
 Review lessons learned from doing the Review	May 2018		
 Scottish Government response to the Recommendations	2018?		Scottish Government process and advocacy requires support
 Paper 6 (Implementation Plan) approved	2019?		Implementation timing dependent on timing of SG decisions
STAGE 5: Support implementation of recommendations and monitor progress (April 2019 onwards)			
 Monitor implementation against key milestones	2019-2025?		Timing yet to be planned
 Paper 7 (progress report) approved	2020?		
 Paper 7 (progress report) updated	2020?		
 Paper 8 (outcomes) approved	2021?		
 Paper 8 (outcomes) updated	2021-2025?		
 on track  SBIF Working Group attention needed  SBIF Advisory Group intervention needed			

Activities

<p>COMPLETED THIS MONTH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Held Workshop 4 on funding options and wrote up and issued its outputs • Distilled a summary of business changes needed using inputs from Workshops 1-4 • Updated our Benefits Dependency Network diagram with business changes • Began to prepare the Detailed Business Case following Workshops 1-4 • Published articles on Workshops 3 and 4 in NBN Network News • Completed the Interview Findings Report ready for publication • Progressed redacting any sensitive content within the Questionnaire appendices • Gave a briefing to Tom Hunt and Clare Blencowe from ALERC on 10th January • Met the Scottish LERCs on 17th January to review findings so far/next steps • Met the SBIF Advisory Group on 18th January to review findings so far/next steps • Gave a briefing to ALERC Directors Board Meeting on 24th January • Gave a briefing to Susan Davies from the Scottish Wildlife Trust on 29th January • Gave a briefing to Wilma Harper from TWIC/NBN Trust on 30th January • Gave a briefing to Jo Judge from NBN Trust and David Roy from BRC on 1st February • Continued to improve navigation for the SBIF Review pages on the NBN website • Progressed our communications plan to meet the needs of each stakeholder group • Tweeted from @ellenwilson to share Review progress and news via #SBIFReview • Re-instated @sb_info_forum (managed by EW/CJ) for SBIF to tweet from in future • Summarised details of/links to biodiversity data sharing portals outside the UK • Began to prepare for briefing SNH's Scientific Advisory Committee in March • Started to look at the Scottish planning system and its digital ambitions • Prepared presentation to give to the IFLI conference on 10th February
<p>NOT DONE THIS MONTH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book follow-up meeting with Robert Nicol at COSLA. • Booking of date with Scottish Government planning department staff not yet fixed • Produce summary infographics for the questionnaire and interview findings
<p>TO DO NEXT MONTH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the discussion section and appendices of the Questionnaire • Draft the Detailed Business Case (Paper 3) and seek SBIF Advisory Group comments • Draft the final Recommendations of the Review (Paper 4) • Issue information paper in advance for SNH's March Scientific Advisory Committee • Publish all Literature Review, Interview and Questionnaire Findings • Continue to tweet about the SBIF Review • Hold date for briefing the BRISC committee at their next meeting on 3rd April • Plan for closing down the Review and archiving review documentation • Plan for forming an Advocacy Group to develop and fulfil an Advocacy Plan (Paper 5) • Plan for forming a 'Support Group' to keep general momentum and to support the Advocacy Group

Key Documents

The documents below will be available via <https://nbn.org.uk/about-us/where-we-are/in-scotland/review/> once each one is approved by the SBIF Advisory Group as the Review progresses:

DOCUMENT	TITLE	STATUS
Paper 1 Brief	Initiating a Review of the Biological Recording Infrastructure in Scotland (formation of, and Terms of Reference and Brief for, a Working Group to undertake this Review)	APPROVED (at 05/09/2016 SBIFAG meeting)
Paper 2 Plan	Detailed plan for the Review of the Biological Recording Infrastructure in Scotland (success criteria, activity plans, and timeline)	APPROVED (for Stage 2)
Paper 3(a) High level Business Case	The High Level Business Case for a Review of the Biological Recording Infrastructure in Scotland (reporting on the perspectives and requirements of each Sector and the need for change)	DRAFT COMPLETED for early workshops but focus now transferred to the Detailed Business Case
Paper 3(b) Detailed Business Case	The Detailed Business Case for Changes to the Biological Recording Infrastructure in Scotland (reporting on the options evaluated and our preferred option)	IN PREP for use at the SBIF Advisory Group meeting on 16 March
Paper 4 Advocacy Plan	Advocacy Plan for our preferred option for a Biological Recording Infrastructure in Scotland (reporting on the advocacy arrangements needed and the potential decision-making process within Scottish Government)	Not started
Paper 5 Implementation Plan	Implementation Plan for our preferred option for a Biological Recording Infrastructure in Scotland (reporting on the transition arrangements needed and potential roadmap for their implementation)	Not started
Paper 6 Final Recommendations	Recommendations from the Review of the Biological Recording Infrastructure in Scotland (recommendations and implementation roadmap)	Not started
Paper 7 Progress Reporting	Progress reporting for the Review of the Biological Recording Infrastructure in Scotland (implementation of our recommendations)	Not started
Paper 8 Outcomes	Outcomes and benefits from our Review of the Biological Recording Infrastructure in Scotland (successes and lessons learned)	Not started

Key Diagrams and Leaflets

The diagrams and leaflets below will also be available via <https://nbn.org.uk/about-us/where-we-are/in-scotland/the-sbif-review/> and are listed here for ease of reference:

- **SBIF Value Model** (the 'windmill') illustrating the components of our biological recording infrastructure that provide value for various communities (decision-makers, biological recorders, data users and service providers).
- **SBIF Review Timeline** setting out the framework of activities involved in the Review and their timing.
- **SBIF Leaflet: Introducing the SBIF Review of the Biological Recording Infrastructure in Scotland**
- **SBIF Review Workshop Outputs** documenting the key messages from each workshop.
- **SBIF Review Interview Findings** documenting the results of key stakeholder interviews. *In prep; not yet available.*
- **SBIF Review Questionnaire Findings** documenting the results of the questionnaire. *In prep; not yet available.*
- **SBIF Review Benefit Dependency Network Diagram** documenting the drivers for change and the business changes needed. *In prep; not yet available.*
- **SBIF Review Detailed Business Case** documenting the options evaluated and our preferred option. *In prep; not yet available.*