

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, Susan Davies
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FREQUENCY	Monthly
OVERALL RAG STATUS	Green

Latest Update

Steady progress is being made on developing the **Detailed Business Case** for transforming the biological recording infrastructure in Scotland. We should complete a full draft by the end of April for comment during May and early June. Four options to achieve the changes needed have been drafted and focus has now turned to creating scenarios for investment appraisal so that decision-makers can consider the merits of different levels of investment (from low cost/minimum change to high cost/transformational change) given anticipated costs and benefits. The SBIF Advisory Group will be able to shape these scenarios on Wednesday 25th April this week when we next meet. Initial dates have been booked to introduce the Review and its emerging recommendations to Scottish Government stakeholders on the 22nd May and 21st June. At these meetings we will be seeking advice on whether the scenarios meet Scottish Government needs/expectations and how best to advocate the recommendations of the Review. Aside from this, we are also seeking funding for a Development Officer to support eventual implementation of our recommendations. 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 2017 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 May 2018	In progress	Review first draft at the SBIF Advisory Group meeting in April
STAGE 4: Issue recommendations and plan their implementation (June/July 2018 to March 2019)			
 Paper 4 (Review Recommendations) approved	15 June 2018	In progress	Sign-off final draft via email
 Paper 5 (Advocacy Plan) approved	15 June 2018	In progress	Scottish Government stakeholder meeting on 22 May and 21 June
 Review lessons learned from doing the Review	July 2018		
 Scottish Government response to the Recommendations	2018?		Scottish Government process needs currently being identified
 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 AND LAST</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalised redactions for the Questionnaire appendices • Completed our Benefits Dependency Network diagram with the addition of business changes, enabling projects and technology • Continued to draft the Business Case, focusing on options for change and transition and annex preparation • Started to draft the investment appraisal and final recommendations of the Review • Received and accommodated feedback from five Scottish LERCs/Recording Groups and NBN Trust on the structure and high-level/skeletal options so far • Spoke to Craig Macadam on 19th February to discuss our advocacy approach • Prepared and gave an update on the progress of the Review and business case options to the SBIF Advisory Group on 15th March • Gave presentation to the Tayside Biodiversity Partnership Recorders' Day in Perth on 17th March • Attended the Marine Data in Scotland event (part of DataFest) on the 19th March • Briefed SNH's Scientific Advisory Committee meeting on 22nd March • Gave a progress update to the BRISC committee on 3rd April • Arranged a date to brief the NESBReC Advisory Committee on the 15th May • Arranged a date to brief the SNH Marine Data Board on the 16th May • Arranged a date to brief Scottish Government stakeholders on 22nd May and 21 June • Began to explore sources of funding for a potential 'SBIF Development Officer' in anticipation of implementation of the recommendations of the Review in due course
<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 • Complete the discussion section of the Questionnaire • Publish all Literature Review, Interview and Questionnaire Findings • Arrange date to brief the Scottish Environment LINK wildlife sub group
<p>TO DO NEXT MONTH</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the discussion section of the questionnaire • Publish all Literature Review, Interview and Questionnaire Findings • Continue to liaise with key stakeholders to seek early comments to aid the business case • Complete the business case and overall recommendations for discussion at the next SBIF Advisory Group meeting on the 14th May • Meet NESBReC Advisory Committee and Scottish Government stakeholders in May • Develop our Advocacy Plan in more detail • Plan for obtaining future funding to support advocacy and implementation of the recommendations of the Review • Plan for closing down the Review and archiving review documentation

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 progress
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)	In progress
Paper 5 Final Recommendations	Recommendations from the Review of the Biological Recording Infrastructure in Scotland (recommendations and implementation roadmap)	Not started
Paper 6 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 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.** *In prep; not yet available.*
- **SBIF Review Detailed Business Case** documenting the recommendations of the Review. *In prep; not yet available.*