

SBIF Review of the Biological Recording Infrastructure in Scotland

Highlight Report



SPONSORS	SBIF Advisory Group
CIRCULATION LIST	SBIF Advisory Group, SBIF Review Working Group, Rachel Tierney, Ed Mackey, Roddy Fairley
DATE	13/09/2019
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FREQUENCY	Quarterly
OVERALL RAG STATUS	Green

Latest Update

We are delighted to report three great things this quarter: firstly, that our stakeholder engagement has won the 'Best Practice: Stakeholder Engagement Award for 2019 at the most recent CIEEM Awards in London! Secondly, that the SBIF Review has been recognised by key stakeholders as providing the 'strategic business case' for transformation of the biological recording infrastructure in Scotland and so we can now develop delivery options in an 'outline business case' for Scottish Government (the first draft of which was discussed at the most recent SBIF Advisory Group meeting last week). Thirdly, SBIF has been invited to give evidence to the ECCLR Committee on the 17th September to inform their understanding of the funding landscape in Scotland and what can be done in the short-to-medium term to tackle current issues. This is a wonderful opportunity to explain the funding challenges felt across the SBIF community. This quarter we have also provided updates to the NBN Board of Trustees and Natural England and will also update the Fife Nature Steering Group and ALERC Directors later this month. We have invited Wilma Harper (NBN Trustee) and Debs Muscat (ALERC Director) to join the SBIF Advisory Group to strengthen NBN Trust and ALERC connections as we move forward.

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	
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 September 2018	Complete	
STAGE 4: Issue recommendations and plan their implementation (June/July 2018 to March 2019)			
Paper 4 (Review Recommendations) approved	15 September 2018	Complete	Published on 14 November 2018
Paper 5 (Advocacy Plan) approved	28 January 2019	Complete	Now maintained as live plan
 Review lessons learned from doing the Review	December 2019		Date to be booked following publication of Paper 6
 Scottish Government response to the Recommendations	2019?		Strategic business case accepted; outline business case now in prep
 Paper 6 (Implementation Plan) approved	2019?		Implementation options will entail consultation with affected parties
STAGE 5: Support implementation of recommendations and monitor progress (April 2019 onwards)			
 Monitor implementation against key milestones	2020-2025?		Milestones and monitoring to be described in Paper 6
 Paper 7 (progress report) approved	2020-2025?		Subject to implementation options being approved and progressed
 Paper 7 (progress report) updated	2020-2025?		Subject to implementation options being approved and progressed
 Paper 8 (outcomes) approved	2025?		A review of outcomes will follow once implementation is complete
 Paper 8 (outcomes) updated	2025-2035?		Outcomes will be tracked for ten years beyond implementation
 on track  SBIF Working Group attention needed  SBIF Advisory Group intervention needed			

Activities

COMPLETED THIS QUARTER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended the 2019 CIEEM Awards Ceremony where we won the CIEEM 'Best Practice: Stakeholder Engagement' Award • Developed and circulated a draft 'outline business case' for implementation of the options for consideration and comment by the SBIF Advisory Group • Contributed an article for the next BRISC Newsletter • Met with Andy Webb, Oliver Grafton, Tim Hill (Natural England) • Provided an update to the NBN Trust Board of Trustees • Attended the Scottish DNA Hub meeting • Attended the SEFARI Scotland Research themes meeting • Contributed to discussions on establishing a SEFARI innovative monitoring fellowship • Continued contribution to the SBIF Blog by Jonathan Willet and Rachel Tierney • Held a meeting of the SBIF Advisory Group on the 4th September • Invited to give evidence to the ECCLR Committee on 17th September • Provide an update to the BRISC Committee on 9th September
NOT DONE THIS QUARTER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book follow-up meeting with Robert Nicol at COSLA. • Meet with the Scottish LERCs • Consider how to begin developing sector benefits roadmaps • Develop a 'story map' to further communicate the Review
TO DO NEXT QUARTER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give evidence to the ECCLR Committee on 17th September • Revise the draft business case for options implementation in response to comments • Prepare a presentation and stand for the NBN Conference • Provide an update to the Fife Nature Record Centre Steering Group on 12th September • Provide an update to the ALERC Board of Directors on 26th September • Arrange and prepare for the next SBIF Advisory Group meeting • Present an update at the Scottish Biodiversity Science Conference on 18th November

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)	APPROVED (by email); including final recommendations
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)	APPROVED on 28 th January 2019
Final Report and Recommendations	Recommendations from the Review of the Biological Recording Infrastructure in Scotland (recommendations and implementation roadmap)	COMPLETE Published on 14 November 2018
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)	In progress; informed by an Outline Business Case (in prep) and consultation with any affected parties
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 are 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 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 Literature Review Outputs** documenting the key findings with an archive of collated sources.
- **SBIF Review Interview Findings** documenting the results of key stakeholder interviews.
- **SBIF Review Questionnaire Findings** documenting the results of the questionnaire.
- **SBIF Review Benefit Dependency Network Diagram** mapping benefit dependencies.
- **SBIF Review Final Report** documenting the business case and recommendations of the Review.