Paper 1: SBIF Review of the Biological Recording Infrastructure in Scotland Highlight Report

SPONSORS	SBIF Advisory Group
CIRCULATION LIST	SBIF Advisory Group (and disseminated via SBIF web page and Twitter)
DATE	10/3/2021
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FREQUENCY	Quarterly
OVERALL RAG STATUS	Green

Latest Update

It has been a fairly quiet period for SBIF while awaiting confirmation of funding from Nature Scot and the Scottish Government for our planned Better Biodiversity Data Project.

Due to the passage of time we recently decided to update the wording of the SBIF Recommendations to ensure they remain current and aligned with the needs of the SBIF Community. To this end we now have a revised (though not dramatically different) version that will now be considered at our next Advisory Group in March. If approved, we will publish these revised Recommendations soon.

Funding for the SBIF Development Officer Post (held by Jonathan Willet) is due to conclude at the end of March. We are assuming that this post will be superseded by the new set of roles to be funded through the Better Biodiversity Data Project such that the secretariat support will be provided by the new National Hub for Scotland in due course (subject to funding approval). We are really grateful to Jonathan for his contribution - his unwavering effort and energy have really helped us maintain momentum over the last 15 months. Thank you, Jonathan!

We have been working with NatureScot on the recommendations coming from the Marine Data Review being undertaken by Rona Sinclair. These recommendations will ultimately constitute the marine element of the SBIF Review (as our original review focused mainly on terrestrial and freshwater environments). We are delighted by the extent of stakeholder engagement carried out through the Marine Data Review and we are looking forward to the benefits arising from it being realised by the marine community.

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**.

Stages and Milestones

STAGE/MILESTONE	DUE/DONE	STATUS	NOTES/RISKS/ISSUES
STAGE 4: Issue recommendations and plan their implementation (initially June/July 2018 to March 2019 – now 2021)			
Paper 6 (Implementation Plan) approved	2021	In progress	A host organisation has been identified and has accepted in principle.
STAGE 5: Support implementation of recommendations and monitor progress (2021? onwards)			
Monitor implementation against key milestones	2022-2024		Milestones and monitoring to be described in Paper 6
Paper 7 (progress report) approved	2022-2024		Subject to implementation options being approved and progressed
Paper 7 (progress report) updated	2022-2024		Subject to implementation options being approved and progressed
Paper 8 (outcomes) approved	2024		A review of outcomes will follow once implementation is complete
Paper 8 (outcomes) updated	2024-2034		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	• Continued to provide support to SBIF Co-Chairs. • Nine meetings of the Working Group to redraft the SBIF recommendations. • One meeting to work on the iRecord Benefit Dependency Network Diagram • Planning of the upcoming SBIF Advisory Group for the 24th March 2022. • Input to the draft Recommendations of The Scottish Marine Biodiversity Data Review (due to be published in Spring 2022). • Met with Natural England's Natural Capital Ecosystem Assessment data team for them to learn from SBIF experience. • Met with Janette Park from Stromness Museum to hear about their plans for biological recording and data management. • Met with Rona Sinclair and the SBIF WG to discuss the Marine Data Review Recommendations. • Tidied up files, emails etc for handover at the end of the post.
NOT DONE THIS QUARTER	• None
TO DO NEXT QUARTER	• Post ends on 31st March 2022.

SBIF 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).

Completed 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 2022)				
	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	17 March 2020	*Complete*	Completed at SBIF Advisory Group meeting
	Scottish Government response to the Recommendations	19 December 2020	*Complete*	Programme proposal submitted to SG
	Approval in principle from the NBN Trust Board to be the project owner of the Better Biodiversity Data Project	10 September 2021	*Complete*	Formal approval will require support from all the LERCs and RGs and budgetary approval from NS/ SG
	Support from LERCs and RGs gauged through three meetings held online.	November 2021	*Complete*	All LERCs and RGs gave their support to the BBD in principle.
	SG and NS approval of the revised BBD budget drafted by the NBN Trust	2022?		
	Final approval to begin he BBD Project from the NBN Trust Board	2022?		
	BBD Project begins	2022?		

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 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 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 28th January 2019
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)	SUBMITTED to NatureScot on the 18th of December 2020. AWAITING final approval of funding. Project Owner (NBN Trust) secured.
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.
- **SBIF Review Investment Programme Proposal** documenting a costed five year implementation programme.