

Pine-tree Lappet Outbreak Management Team

Minutes of Third Meeting held on 4 March 2010

Silvan House, Edinburgh

Present:

Roddie Burgess, Head of Plant Health (Chair)

David Barbour, Consultant Entomologist

Charlton Clark, Press Offices, CFS

Hugh Clayden, Sustainable Forest Management, FC Scot, Silvan House

Michael Hymers, Forest Management Officer, FFE Head Office, Inverness

Chris Inglis, Executive Director & Company Secretary, ConFor

David Jardine, FDM, Inverness Forest District

Roger Moore, Senior Scientific Officer, NRS

Dr Chris Sydes, Species Policy and Advice Manager, SNH

Richard Wallace, Development and Operations Advisor, Highland Conservancy

Stuart A'Hara, Molecular Biologist, NRS

Joan Cottrell, Programme Group Manager, NRS

Debbie Erskine, Secretary

Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Introductions

1. Roddie welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave apologies for Dave Tracy. He introduced Chris Inglis as a new member of the Team representing ConFor.

Agenda Item 2: Minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2009

2. The Team agreed that bullet point four of paragraph 23 should be amended to read "the market might become flooded with pine felled as a result of Red Band Needle Blight".

Agenda Item 3: Matters Arising

3. Action points outstanding from the notes of discussion held in Inverness on 20 November 2008:

- Item 8 - David Jardine reported that work at sites where a number of Schedule 1 birds were present was manageable.
- Item 17 - Roddie explained that the Exotic Pest Alert had been published however, due to other pressing developments, it had not been revised but that he would now take this forward.

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4. Action points outstanding from the second meeting held on 15 October 2009.
- Item 5 - Pest Risk Analysis (PRA). Roger reported that the PRA was now up to date and had been peer reviewed by Dr Hugh Evans.
 - Item 6a - DNA Analysis. Stuart/Joan had prepared a proposal for funding over two years which had been approved. David Barbour presented a paper about the history of moth recording in and around the known Pine-tree Lappet moth area. He explained that the three main nationwide schemes that had recorded moth species since the 1960s were: a system of light traps operated for the Rothamsted Insect Survey; a distribution mapping scheme by the ITE Biological Records Centre which had been discontinued but that records were still available; and a distribution mapping scheme run by Butterfly Conservation. He concluded that the investigation of moth recording history did not provide evidence that good and comprehensive records of moth species had been made in the relevant area at any time in the period up to 2000. The evidence from the history of moth recording therefore did not go against the idea that Pine-tree Lappet could have gone unrecorded throughout most of the recording period. Following discussion the team agreed that:
 - David B should carry out further surveys at Culbin, Loch Fleet, Glen Affric and Strathglass;
 - further systematic monitoring could be funded from the contingency fund to confirm the boundaries of the PtL population, this then forming a baseline against which future expansion could be monitored;
 - monitoring would continue largely by pheremone trapping and light trapping; and
 - Butterfly Conservation Scotland and landowners should be consulted and perhaps involved in systematic light trapping.

Action: David B to carry out further surveys (funded by the FCS pests & pathogens contingency fund – subject to receipt of a costed proposal). Roger to prepare proposal and cost for trapping programme for Hugh. Roger/David B set up meeting with Butterfly Conservation.

- Item 7 – Options for Control. Roddie reported that: he had to speak to Pat Snowden about an Economic Impact Assessment; he had written to ConFor about a representative and Chris Inglis was attending the meeting in that capacity; the 10k radius would remain in place but it may be necessary to redraw the boundaries following further surveys; and he had prepared a consultation paper. Michael reported that SEPA hadn't dismissed approval for chemical spraying. Roger had still to speak to Stewart Snape about the possibility of monitoring by remote sensing as he was awaiting information about what levels of infestation could be picked up by the remote sensing method.

Action: Roddie to speak to Pat Snowdon about an Economic Impact Assessment. Roger to keep the possibility of remote sensing under review.

- Item 8 – SNH Update. Roddie had sent a copy of the Polish Annual Report to Chris.

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Agenda Item 4: Situation Report

5. The Team discussed the Situation Report and agreed that:

- it was unlikely that “instant” pines were the pathway as the majority of plants had been imported from Ireland; and
- if the moth had been established for a number of years then machinery could be the pathway although it would be difficult to pinpoint due to lack of records of machinery movement although the information might be available from contractors who would remember working overseas.

Action: Chris I/David J to compile list of machinery movement to overseas windblow sites.

Roddie to add update on Climate Modelling at paragraph 9 and republish the Report on the Commission’s website

Agenda Item 5: DNA Analysis (native-v-non-native)

6. Stuart gave a PowerPoint presentation and recapped the results from the initial work carried out using microsatellite markers designed for another species of *Dendrolimus*: that Scottish and German samples had been compared but only three markers had been informative. However, Scottish samples had less variation which suggested a genetic bottleneck of the Scottish population. Current progress was then reported and ten microsatellite markers have now been developed specifically for the Pine-tree Lappet and mitochondrial DNA sequences have been generated from further samples sourced from Finland, Russia, Germany and Italy. Results concluded that the ten Scottish sequences were identical, in contrast to European samples which showed variation within their populations. Stuart added that further DNA comparisons had to be carried out in an attempt to determine the origin of the Scottish population and that Forest Research were contacting entomologists overseas to obtain further samples. The Team agreed that these findings confirmed the importance of obtaining information about the movement of harvesting contractors' machinery.

Action: Stuart to arrange for copies of the presentation to be sent to Team members.

Agenda Item 6: Climate Modelling Update

7. Roger presented the paper prepared by Duncan Ray and Michael Petr and gave Duncan’s apologies for being unable to be present. He explained that Pine-tree Lappet prefers sandy freely draining soils, cold, dry winters and hot, dry summers. Its preferred host tree was *Pinus sylvestris* but other conifers were at risk. Roger made a PowerPoint presentation and displayed a map of woodland sites in Scotland which would be suitable to host Pine-tree Lappet. He added that Seljaninov’s hydrothermal coefficient had been used successfully in Poland to identify areas that had climatic conditions suitable for frequent outbreaks of the Pine-tree Lappet. The UKCP09 climate projections interface (weather generator) had been used to simulate daily climate data over seven 30 year periods at 10 year intervals into this

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century on a 5x5km square of the Beaully catchment area. The analysis showed that the change in summer climatic conditions would become favourable for outbreaks in future years. However, further research was needed to understand the geographical extent of that favourability and to ascertain the impact of natural control mechanisms such as mild, wet winters or parasitology.

8. The Team agreed that the report presented good evidence that the climate would change in the future but that further DNA analysis needed to be carried out before further climate analysis work was undertaken.

Action: Roger to ask Duncan about the cost of climate analysis at sites round Moray; to email presentation to OMT members; and to confirm with Duncan that the Report could be posted on the Commission's website.

Agenda Item 7: Planned Power Line

9. Roddie presented the paper prepared by Dave Tracy and gave Dave's apologies for his absence. He explained that the Beaully to Denny overhead power line had to be routed through two of the woods where the larvae of Pine-tree Lappet had been found and that any harvesting work would have to be carried out in accordance with the procedures set out in the Commission's Pine-tree Lappet Biosecurity Protocol. David Jardine reported that the planned work for spring had been deferred to late summer. Roddie explained to Chris Inglis that the Biosecurity Protocol had not yet been published and that the Biosecurity Programme Board would produce a Protocol which could be adapted to be used in various situations. The Team discussed the paper and agreed that:

- burning brash was not necessary as long as the material was not moved from the site;
- it would be worthwhile felling a few trees to establish whether Pine-tree Lappet become dislodged during the felling operation; and
- the paper would be revisited at the next meeting.

Agenda Item 8: Control Options – draft consultation paper

10. Roddie introduced the paper and suggested that any public consultation should be put on hold until further work had been carried out on the DNA analysis and climate matching relating to the Pine-tree Lappet. The Team discussed the options and concluded that targeted consultation with key stakeholders would be more appropriate than a public consultation on this highly specialist subject. Prior to this, a submission to the Environment Ministers would be required, this setting out the current facts, an analysis of options (including do nothing) and FC/FCS's recommendations. The Team agreed to meet on 25 August and make arrangements for a meeting with stakeholders on 5 October.

Action: Richard, Chris I and David J to organise a meeting with stakeholders. Roddie and Hugh to discuss the content of the Ministerial submission.

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Agenda Item 9: SNH Update

12. Chris S explained that he had written a management team paper for SNH senior management. The paper was generally well received and their only major concern was that the local wildlife could be significantly impacted by sanitation felling and concluded that their preferred option was to undertake control through pesticides. Roddie reminded Chris that spraying would not eradicate PtL but would only control populations and would require repeated applications. Chris added that he would send a copy of the paper to Roddie.

Action: Chris S to send copy of paper prepared for SNH senior management to Roddie.

Agenda Item 10: Communications and Publicity

13. Charlton introduced his paper. A low-key news release had been issued following the previous meeting, however, a number of national media had run stories conveying that Pine-tree Lappet could pose a serious threat to British forests if it became established. The Team agreed there would be nothing to be gained by publishing the results of the interim DNA study at this time but to wait until more complete data was available. Hugh informed the Team that Butterfly Conservation were holding a recorders' meeting later in the month at which he had been asked to speak. Hugh/Charlton agreed to discuss further. Charlton agreed to update and re-publish the Q&A on the Commission's website and issue a News Release, targeted at specialist groups at the end of May. David J agreed to suggest Pine-tree Lappet be featured as pest of the month by the Highland Biological Recording Group. He added that Plant Health meetings being held by RFS Highland and Highlands and Islands Forestry Forum would be a good opportunity to communicate the Pine-tree Lappet story.

Action: Hugh/Charlton to discuss the Butterfly Conservation recorders' meeting. Charlton update and re-publish Q&A on website and issue a News Release at the end of May. David J/Richard/Charlton to discuss communications with Highland Biological Recording Group, RFS Highland and Highlands and Islands Forestry Forum.

Agenda Item 11: Any Other Business

14. Richard confirmed that all woodland owners within the 10 km radius had been informed that biosecurity precautions would be put in place to prevent accidental spread. Roddie suggested that Richard should ask Dave Tracy to re-draft a Statutory Notice that would be served pending further investigations into the status and damage potential of PtL. Roddie confirmed that the biosecurity protocol should be applied in respect of all coniferous trees in the 10 km zone.

Action: Richard to ask Dave Tracy to re-draft the proposed Statutory Notice.

Agenda Item 12: Date of Next Meeting

15. The date of the next meeting was set for 25 August (para 11).

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Summary of Actions

Agenda Item 3: Matters Arising

David B to carry out further surveys (funded by the FCS pests & pathogens contingency fund – subject to receipt of a costed proposal).
Roger to prepare proposal and cost for trapping programme for Hugh.
Roger/David B set up meeting with Butterfly Conservation.
Roddie to speak to Pat Snowdon about an Economic Impact Assessment.
Roger to keep the possibility of remote sensing under review.

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Chris I/David J to compile list of machinery movement to overseas windblow sites.
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Stuart to arrange for copies of the presentation to be sent to Team members.

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Roddie and Hugh to discuss the content of the Ministerial submission.

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Chris S to send copy of paper prepared for SNH senior management to Roddie.

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Charlton update and republish Q&A on website and issue a News Release at the end of May.
David J/Richard/Charlton to discuss communications with Highland Biological Recording Group, RFS Highland and Highlands and Islands Forestry Forum.

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