

**Biosecurity Programme Board
Meeting
Fera, Sand Hutton, York
12th May 2011**

Minute

Present: Roger Coppock ([Corporate and Forestry Support, Chair](#))
 Richard Siddons ([Forestry Commission Wales](#))
 John Morgan ([Corporate and Forestry Support](#))
 Bruce Rothnie ([Forestry Commission England](#))
 David Slawson ([The Food and Environment Research Agency](#)),
 Hugh Clayden ([Forestry Commission Scotland](#))
 Chris Inglis ([The Confederation of Forest Industries](#))
 Jean Waddie ([Rural and Environment Directorate, Scottish Government](#))
 David Sulman ([The United Kingdom Forest Products Association](#))
 Nick Boulton ([Timber Trades Federation](#))
 Joan Webber ([Forest Research](#))
 Jon Heuch ([Arboricultural Association](#))
 Andrew Sharkey ([Woodland Trust](#))
 Mike Wray ([The Food and Environment Agency](#)) – (Introduction only)
 Ian Brownlee ([Corporate and Forestry Support, Secretariat](#))

Summary of Action points

| Agenda Item | Action |
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| 3. Matters arising | |
| a) Network mapping: | Action: Stewart Snape to review the contact list |
| c) List of publicity events | Action: Board members to forward suggestions for publicity events to Stewart Snape. |
| d) Reporting indicators | Action: All members to propose questions for a Biosecurity awareness questionnaire to Stewart Snape by the end of the month (May). Action: Roger Coppock to consider adding biosecurity questions in the Public Opinion Survey. |

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| Communications Strategy | Action: Roger Coppock to speak to Charlton Clark and consider making the suggested changes to the Communication Strategy |
| 4. Tree Health and Plan Biosecurity Action Plan | Action: Roger Coppock to consider how the Biosecurity Action Plan would be adopted as a core publication by the FC's Executive Board |
| 5. Biosecurity Protocol | Action: John Morgan to work with Hugh Clayden and Bruce Rothnie to remove the operational requirements from the Protocol for discussions at the practical actions workshop in Bristol on 25th May. |
| 6. Update on the European Union review of the Plant Health regime | Action: Roger Coppock to raise the restocking issue with the EB and consider changes to the legislation. Action: Bruce Rothnie to review how the EIA may assist in a route to change the legislation to require restocking. |
| 7. Current status of pests and diseases. | Action: Ian Brownlee would make contact with the Biofuel companies who had engaged with him to date regarding woodchip imports to try and ascertain the volumes of birch woodchips likely to be imported to GB from North America. Action: John Morgan would check on the use of EPPO's Agrilus anxius PRA for scientific justification for taking action against wood of birch should the UK need to move in isolation of other member States. |

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| | <p>Action: John Morgan to liaise with Hugh following his communications with the local authorities in Scotland about the disease and provide an update at the next Biosecurity Programme Board meeting.</p> <p>Action: Hugh Clayden to discuss with John Morgan the listing of <i>Phytophthora lateralis</i> before any submission is made to enter it as a quarantine disease in Annex 1 of the EU Plant Health Directive</p> <p>Action: Joan Webber and Claire Sansford, Fera to consider producing a joint FR/ Fera information leaflet about <i>Phytophthora lateralis</i>.</p> |
| <p>11. Dates for next meeting</p> | <p>Action: Stewart Snape to email members to agree a suitable date and venue for the next meeting which would take place in early September.</p> |

1. Welcome and Introductions (Roger Coppock and Mike Wray)

Roger Coppock welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Dr John Morgan who had replaced Roddie Burgess as the Forestry Commission's Head of Plant Health who was attending his first Biosecurity Programme Board (BPB) meeting and Ian Brownlee, FC's Operations Manager, Plant Health Service who was substituting for Stewart Snape. Apologies were received from Laura Jones ([Forestry Commission England](#)); Martin Williams ([Plant Health and Biotechnology Branch, Welsh Assembly Government](#)).

Charlton Clark ([Corporate and Forestry Support](#)) and John Dye ([Timber Packaging and Pallet Confederation](#)).

Roger Coppock also introduced Mike Wray, Operations Director, Fera to the meeting members and invited him to give an overview of Fera's organisational structure and the work that it was currently involved in.

Mike Wray advised that Fera was a new agency of Defra which was launched two years ago when Defra's Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate (PHSI), Central Science Laboratory (CSL), Bee Health Unit, Plant and Varietal Seeds and the Government's Decontamination Unit were brought together. Their main focus was on plant and crop health, food security and wildlife ecology and they were involved in producing scientific based practical solutions which fed into the policy areas where Fera took the lead but they would also closely liaise with the Agriculture Departments of the Devolved Administrations (DA's) and the Forestry Commission. Some of the practical solutions included pest and disease diagnostics and assessing technologies to determine the geographical origin of food and trade in international timber both of which were 'hot topics'. More recently the government was asking industry to get more involved in designing practical solutions as government resources were reducing.

Fera was also involved in research into phytophthora in plants and Bovine tuberculosis (TB) in badgers. Mike explained that in the past it was often difficult to generate media interest in plant diseases when there was the media hype over animal health issues like 'BSE - mad cow disease' to compete against. The situation was, however, now changing with more of the public taking an interest in protecting the environment and HRH Prince Charles had recently had meetings with the Dr Bob Watson, Government Chief Scientist and Jim Paice, Secretary of State regarding tree health issues which was elevating the topic up the political agenda.

It was noted that in relation to the budget funds, available in the EU for animal health issues, were considerably higher than those available for plant health matters and that this rift needed to be addressed to strike a balance. In the UK government budgets operated on the basis there was no new money available and that if additional finances were required by departments to combat new pests and diseases they had to be sourced from existing funds.

2. Minutes of last meeting (Roger Coppock)

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

3. Matters arising (Roger Coppock)

Network mapping: Board members had provided network contacts and returns to Stewart Snape. Richard Siddons was conscious of the fact that Laura Jones and others may become overloaded as main members of the contact list and asked for it to be reviewed.

Action: Stewart Snape to review the contact list

Exemption to publicity freeze: Roger Coppock advised that the publicity freeze was still in place for printed material and commented that where it had been necessary the Forestry Commission had compiled and submitted business cases to Defra so that they could produce advice and guidance material and these had been agreed.

List of publicity events: Roger Coppock commented that this subject was related to the publicity freeze issue and asked for members to provide suggestions for publicity events to Stewart Snape.

Action: Board members to forward suggestions for publicity events to Stewart Snape.

Reporting indicators: David Slawson had produced a biosecurity questionnaire and forwarded it to LANTRA. He was keen to do some benchmarking and he also wanted to do an action list. Meeting members were requested to respond to Stewart Snape with additional questions. Hugh Clayden asked if there were any biosecurity questions in the Public Opinion Survey and Roger Coppock agreed to speak to Sheila Ward, Statistic Branch, CFS about this and consider further.

Chris Inglis pointed out that the questions on the list concerned direct employees rather than contractors employed in gardens etc and David Slawson agreed to take this point on board.

Action: All members to propose questions for a Biosecurity awareness questionnaire to Stewart Snape by the end of the month (May).

Action: Roger Coppock to consider adding biosecurity questions in the Public Opinion Survey.

Communications Strategy – Roger Coppock reported that Charlton Clark had redrafted the Communications Strategy which would be circulated to members in paper and electronic form and he requested comments within 2 weeks of the meeting date. Referring to the section on 'Goals and Objectives' within the Strategy document, Roger indicated that there were a number of target audiences for communications, and we

need to ensure that the messages go to the right audiences. Referring to the Executive Summary, Chris Inglis would prefer reference to the introduction of pests and diseases rather than trees and forests being under frequent attack by them.

Roger Coppock agreed to speak to Charlton Clark and consider making the suggested changes to the Communication Strategy.

4. Tree Health and Biosecurity Action Plan (David Slawson)

Chris Inglis commented that there hadn't been an auditable paper trail to record what had happened to the Tree Health funding bid to Defra and both Roger Coppock and David Slawson agreed to provide an update.

David reported that the bid had been submitted to Defra but it hadn't been successful as it stood, due to the fact that it focused on research and it was felt a more holistic approach was required. Following the funding bid's lack of success Tim Rollinson, FC Director General, and Prof. Bob Watson, Government Chief Scientist organised a 'Living with Tree Pests and Diseases' workshop in London for a range of government officials and interested bodies from the forestry and arboriculture sectors etc. The outcome of this meeting resulted in the development of a Biosecurity Action Plan comprising of four workstreams ie

1. Protecting the UK – import controls: options
2. Management and practical actions
3. Public and stakeholder engagement
4. Research opportunities and priorities

These had involved a lot of extra work for those concerned in managing the workstreams, but also complemented existing work. For example, there was a link with work on the Biosecurity Communications strategy and the workstream on Public and Stakeholder engagement. David asked the meeting members for their agreement on this approach to avoid duplication of effort and the meeting members agreed as it avoided their attendance at two separate meetings for what was essentially the same thing.

Andy Sharkey commented that a number of people had expressed disappointment after attending the initial meeting in London as there hadn't been sufficient recognition for work that had already been achieved.

Joan Webber commented that the Research Opportunities and priorities workstream had been more positive and David Slawson added that early detection of pests and diseases had been highlighted as an important aspect. In addition, landowners were becoming more aware of a need to keep pests and diseases out and implement generic measures that would stand them in good stead in the future.

A meeting for the Management and Practical Actions workstream group had been organised for 25th May in Bristol and it was commented that members should avoid creating duplication of effort by liaising with colleagues in other groups.

David Slawson had a suite of biosecurity guidance posters which related to parks and gardens and he advised that John Morgan and others could draw on information contained in these for the practical actions workstream. The guidance posters were generic to the UK and could be adapted for woodland owners.

Chris Inglis felt that it was important for the industry to receive formal feedback from these group meetings and David Slawson agreed to publish the Biosecurity Action Plan on the Defra website and report back on key issues that were agreed.

The first draft of the Biosecurity Action Plan was due for completion in early June in preparation for the next meeting with HRH Prince of Wales and the Secretary of State which was scheduled for the middle of June.

Roger Coppock reported that Defra's Chief Scientist had agreed to look at the funding for separate areas as he wanted to keep more money internally so that agencies could bid for funding and David Slawson viewed this as a positive route since plant health had been poorly funded in the past.

Richard Siddons considered that the Biosecurity Action Plan required joint governance if it is to be adopted as a core publication by the FC's Executive Board and Roger Coppock agreed to consider this further and decide on how best to progress it.

Action: Roger Coppock to consider how the Biosecurity Action Plan would be adopted as a core publication by the FC's Executive Board

5. Biosecurity Protocol (John Morgan)

John Morgan reported that the final version (March 2011) of the Biosecurity Protocol had been circulated to all of the meeting members prior to the meeting.

John commented that the original drafts of the Protocol had been endorsed by the Biosecurity Programme Board but he was aware that concerns had been raised by field officers on how it would be implemented in practice in relation to day to day forest operations. He added that perhaps there may be a need to explain the risk based element of the protocol and supplement this with further detailed guidance. Drawing on his experience in the Plant and Seed Supply Business Unit, John could appreciate the practitioner's concerns and thought that it could be pointed out that a template already existed in the form of the SEARS Guidance in Scotland. He felt that an analogy with the H&S Guidance could be drawn to highlight that not one size fitted all and that some approaches needed to be tempered for different scenarios.

He therefore asked for the meeting members' endorsement of the revised Biosecurity Protocol with the caveat that further detailed guidance would follow.

Hugh Clayden commented that he was delighted with the policy as it raised the biosecurity game plan but he had serious reservations about the prescriptive nature of the Protocol and he felt that it needed to be more risk based if it was to be adopted as a credible document. Hugh considered that the Protocol needed an element of proportionality and that the references to 'must do's' would have to be removed before he could move to signing the document off. Bruce Rothnie agreed with Hugh's comments and advised that whilst FCE regulatory staff bought into the concept of the protocol the operational team dismissed it immediately as impractical.

Jon Heugh stated that the protocol addressed the forest situation but it didn't address the *Phytophthora lateralis* outbreak situation in urban areas. He too considered that the Protocol's wording should be more reflective and risk based.

Following a detailed discussion it was agreed that the Protocol must get staff to believe that it can make a difference when it is issued and that the current version didn't achieve that. It was therefore agreed that it would be revised so that it concentrated on the requirements of regulatory and research staff first. Industry members would then be approached and asked to provide input on how the Protocol could be implemented at an operational level, perhaps by utilising the practical actions group meeting in Bristol as a forum for this.

John Morgan therefore agreed to work with Hugh Clayden and Bruce Rothnie to remove the operational requirements from the protocol for discussions at the practical actions workshop in Bristol on 25th May.

Action: John Morgan to work with Hugh Clayden and Bruce Rothnie to remove the operational requirements from the Protocol for discussions at the practical actions workshop in Bristol on 25th May.

6. Update on the European Union review of the Plant Health regime (Roger Coppock)

Roger Coppock referred to the meeting papers that had been circulated by Stewart Snape in advance of the meeting and invited comments.

Chris Inglis commented that there was nothing in the plant health legislation to force restocking on sites which had been felled due the requirements of statutory notices served on landowners and managers in connection with trees infected with harmful organisms.

Roger Coppock responded that the government wanted to reduce legislation and that legal advice had been taken on this subject and the Executive Board (EB) would have to decide if it wanted to amend the legislation. The Biosecurity Programme Board asked Roger to flag this matter up as an issue of importance and concern as it contradicted other policy.

Bruce Rothnie advised that he was exploring how the Environmental Impact assessment (EIA) may help as a route to change.

Action: Roger Coppock to raise the restocking issue with the EB and consider changes to the plant health legislation.

Action: Bruce Rothnie to review how the EIA may assist in a route to change the plant health legislation to require restocking.

7. Current status of pests and diseases (John Morgan)

John Morgan reported that the Pest Risk Analysis (PRA) for Bronze Birch Borer (*Agilus anxius*) was at an advanced stage and there was an European Plant Protection Organisation (EPPO) PRA available for *Phytophthora lateralis* but not for Ash Dieback (*Chalara fraxinae*). Draft submissions to take action against *A. anxius* and *C. fraxinae* had been prepared and were supported by the BPB members but they had not been submitted to the Minister yet.

Joan Webber had produced an information note about Ash Dieback but it had not been published.

The UK could take emergency actions against pests not listed in Annex 1 of the EU Plant Health Directive (Council Directive 2000/29/EC) in isolation of other EU member states after introducing relevant national legislation but John Morgan was mindful of the fact the new government policy required the Forestry Commission to revoke an old piece of legislation for every piece of new legislation that it introduced. Old pieces of legislation that could be subject to revocation included The Watermark Disease (Local Authorities) Order (1974) as amended 1992 and The Dutch Elm Disease (Local Authorities) Order 1984 as amended in 1998.

Andy Sharkey requested an update on *Phytophthora undulata* as he was keen to get information about the disease issued to relevant parties as he viewed it as potential conservation threat. John Morgan replied that he was unclear on the action required and Joan Webber commented that her colleagues in Forest Research (FR) had a small contract with Scottish National Heritage (SNH) to look at how wide spread the disease was and what the symptoms were. FR would be compiling data about the disease and Joan Webber hoped to be in a position to report back at the next BPB meeting. It was anticipated that the findings would report that the disease was more wide spread than originally thought.

Hugh Clayden reported that Gordon Patterson, FC Scotland had raised the matter as a Plant Health issue.

John Morgan had concerns that environment groups tended to take cuttings from Juniper and advised that any information notes about *Phytophthora undulata* must include biosecurity measures with regards to the taking of cuttings.

John then gave an update on forestry matters that had arisen at the EU's Standing Committee on Plant Health (SCPH) meeting in Brussels that he had attended earlier in the week. A technical proposal to list Oak Processionary Moth (*Thaumetopea processionea*) as a 'quarantine' pest in the Protected Zone Annex of the EU Plant Health Directive would place stringent controls on the movement of oak plants from other EU member States. Germany and the Netherlands viewed these proposals as a trade ban on the movement of oak plants from continental Europe to the UK as OPM was present in a number of continental EU member States. However, other EU member States agreed that the UK had the sovereign right to protect itself from this pest. Progress to implement more stringent controls on the movement of oak plants would commence with the drafting of the specification for inspections at supply nurseries.

There was less positive news regarding Pine Wood Nematode (*Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*) in Portugal as the latest Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) Mission (the seventeenth since the outbreak occurred in 1999) had reported that the pest was spreading and the matter had been referred to higher officials in DG SANCO given Portugal's receipt of EU Funding for combating the pest over the years.

In terms of the EU Directive, listing of new quarantine pests - Ash Dieback (*Chalara fraxinae*) and the Bronze Birch Borer (*Agrilus anxius*) - were distinct possibilities. Daegan Inward of Forest Research had been involved with the drafting of the EPPO Pest Risk Analysis (PRA) for *A. anxius* and EU member state support was expected on it's listing as hardwood chip imports to Scandinavia were taking place from both Canada and the USA.

Nick Boulton commented that the import of hardwood chips into the UK was not emphasised in the PRA and he anticipated that the trade could commence quicker than expected, particularly from North America.

John Morgan commented that birch woodchip was a very high risk pathway for this pest and he considered that heat treatment would be used as a landing requirement for imports of the material. Nick Boulton felt that the EU would have to work very hard at introducing new controls for birch woodchips as the sale price would be low until heat treatment measures were imposed.

John commented that the EPPO PRA was nearing completion to provide scientific justification to permit the EU to take action against wood of birch but in drawing an analogy with introducing measures for Oak Processionary Moth, where the timescale was extended from 2008 to 2011, there could be delays. There was no noticeable pressure from Finland to introduce measures even though they had a lucrative business in birch plywood production.

Ian Brownlee would make contact with the Biofuel companies who had engaged with him to date regarding woodchip imports to try and ascertain the volumes of birch woodchips likely to be imported from North America and John Morgan would check on the use of EPPO's PRA for scientific justification for taking action against wood of birch should the UK need to move in isolation of other member States.

Chris Inglis and Nick Boulton were concerned about the imports of all hardwood chip imports from all third countries as Plant Health Inspectors would not be able to distinguish species (hardwoods and softwood) in bulk woodchip imports.

Ian Brownlee and John Morgan agreed therefore to explore the possibility of introducing control measures against all hardwood species of woodchips (all conifer woodchips were

already subject to control) from all countries in the same way that had been done for all species of wood packaging materials in relation to ISPM15 – the International Standard for Phytosanitary Measures relating to wood packaging material used in international trade. Ian would also look at the imports of hardwood woodchips from European Countries in respect of controls for the UK's Protected Zone status.

John reported that there were three outbreaks of *Phytophthora lateralis* in Scotland and potentially another four as far afield as Ullapool. The French information paper circulated in advance of the meeting highlighted that *P.lateralis* was a serious disease for Lawson Cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*). The fungal like pathogen was very closely related to *P.ramorum* and therefore hybridisation between the two species of phytophthora was possible. A good quality draft PRA existed for *P.lateralis* to assist in taking emergency actions against the disease if the board members considered that they wanted to implement them. Plants for planting from other EU member States would be subject to inspection.

Hugh Clayden requested prior discussion with John Morgan on *Phytophthora lateralis* before any submission was made to list it as a quarantine disease in Annex 1 of the EU Plant Health Directive.

Hugh commented that Lawson Cypress was an ornamental tree not a forest tree although he appreciated that the experience from Oregon demonstrated that spread of the disease could be problematic regardless of this fact. He undertook to write to the 32 local authorities in Scotland who have been felling Lawson Cypress trees to advise them of the disease but wondered if the UK should be treating the disease in the same way as it did for *Phytophthora cinamomi* which had been present for many years and the UK simply lived with it. He was concerned about the potential for the number of interceptions of *P.lateralis* infected plants from France to increase.

Chris Inglis felt that it was necessary to make contact with a wider audience about the disease and Joan Webber reported that she had just provided photographs of disease symptoms on Lawson Cypress to Claire Sansford, Fera for the publication of an Information Note which Joan considered could be issued as a joint FR/Fera publication. It was considered that all Leylandii species would have to differentiate from Lawson Cypress in the Information Note to avoid the risk of a large number of reports of symptoms on these unaffected species from members of the public who would always err on the side of caution when considering reporting the symptoms of *P.lateralis* infection.

Roger Coppock felt that it was important to have the information about the disease ready but he considered that it needed careful handling.

John Morgan therefore agreed to liaise with Hugh following his communications with the local authorities in Scotland about the disease and provide an update at the next Biosecurity Programme Board meeting.

Action: Ian Brownlee would make contact with the Biofuel companies who had engaged with him to date regarding woodchip imports to try and ascertain the likely volumes of birch woodchips.

Action: John Morgan would check on the use of EPPO's PRA for scientific justification for taking action against wood of birch should the UK need to move in isolation of other member States.

Action: John Morgan to liaise with Hugh following his communications with the local authorities in Scotland about the disease and provide an update at the next Biosecurity Programme Board meeting.

Action: Hugh Clayden to discuss with John Morgan the listing of *Phytophthora lateralis* before any submission is made to enter it as a quarantine disease in Annex 1 of the EU Plant Health Directive

Action: Joan Webber and Claire Sansford, Fera to consider producing a joint FR/ Fera information leaflet about *Phytophthora lateralis*.

8. *P. ramorum* and larch (Bruce Rothnie)

Using a power-point presentation Bruce Rothnie gave the meeting members an update on the helicopter surveys of larch in England. Flights had taken place on 18/19 April and 4th May and more flights were planned for the risk zone. There were 14 non compliant cases whereby the owners hadn't complied with the requirements of the statutory notices and negotiations to effect compliance were underway. There had been 30 applications over the winter to fell larch, four of which were suspect and may require notices to be served.

The good news from the surveys was that trees showing symptoms of the diseases were clustered around previously identified outbreak sites and there were no new isolated cases of infection. FCE were trying to get a better idea of where larch existed from the surveys.

The consultant computer modellers had used software to predict risk areas in 20 year time periods and the forecasted high risk zones included the Lake District, Cumbria and Galloway, SW Scotland.

In summary Bruce reported that –

- Majority of new symptomatic trees are clustered near previously identified sites
- No new isolated sites of concern
- Thousands of digital images to be down-loaded into GIS and analysed spatially
- 120 sites planned for ground truthing
- Last year 1 in 3 trees were infected other symptoms were due to frost or squirrel damage etc

As Bruce had to leave the meeting at this point he indicated that would be happy to deal with any questions that arose from the information in the presentation when he was back in the office.

9. Industry round-up

Bark treatment

David Sulman asked if there had been any progress made on the heat treatment specification for the treatment of larch bark derived from infected sites in Great Britain. Joan Webber reported that there had been a delay in conducting trials due to a difference of opinion regarding the standard of trials required. However, she had agreed to work with Richard Palmer, A W Jenkinsons on monitoring temperature profiles in uninfected piles of bark. As the months of April and May had been extremely busy for Joan and her team she hoped to be in contact with A W Jenkinsons soon to get the trials underway.

Ian Brownlee reported that he had taken part in the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) Mission to Portugal at the end of March to review their heat treatment protocol for bark using a natural composting method and he commented that whilst the protocol had been agreed by the members of the Standing Committee on Plant Health, Brussels the FVO team had concerns about the efficacy of the treatment process after seeing it in practice.

The Portuguese protocol had been developed to be effective against Pine Wood Nematode which Ian considered was less of a risk in terms to being transported to susceptible host species in isolated bark material than *Phytophthora ramorum* was and therefore he felt that any treatment protocol produced by the UK for *P.ramorum* in isolated bark material had to adequately address the risks.

Phytophthora ramorum on larch

Roger Coppock reported that the '*Phytophthora ramorum* in larch trees – update' information paper had been circulated to the meeting members and it was also available to the public via the FC's website.

Hugh Clayden asked what the timeline was for the *Phytophthora ramorum* strategies implementation as he was interested in distances being cited for natural spread of the disease which had reduced from 10km to 4km to 250m.

Joan Webber commented that a range of 250m took into account everything growing in the area and addressed 99.9% of the infection. The requirements of plant health statutory notices would be revised to incorporate the revised infection's natural spread distance but Roger Coppock added that each case had to be considered on the basis of the sporulating host species. The list of susceptible species was being revised.

Andy Sharkey thought that the sporulating range for rhododendron, ash and sweet chestnut was 250m but felt that the position for ash needed to be clarified.

Hugh Clayden's understanding was that 100m survey from a symptomatic tree was sufficient initially but the distance could be extended up to 250m and beyond if there were concerns expressed by the surveyors. His initial concerns related to the large radius of prophylactic clearance.

David Sulman stated that forestry agents were content with the surveying arrangements etc for rhododendron but they were concerned about what was happening with other susceptible species. Roger Coppock had raised this matter with the Outbreak Management Team and Natural England was involved. David Slawson commented that the original programme had required the clearance of rhododendron since 2001 and a lot had been achieved since then. The sporulation distance in rhododendron was considerably less than larch and it was felt that some research was needed on sporulation distances for a variety of susceptible species.

The BPB felt that it was important for the FC *Phytophthora* Outbreak Management Team to work closely with the E&W Project Board in the strategic approach to the management of the disease. Bruce was to present the *Phytophthora ramorum* strategy to the Project Board for England and Wales at its next meeting.

Dothistroma (Red Band) Needle Blight

Chris Inglis reported that Hugh Clayden had asked for industry's assistance in surveying for the spread of Red Band Needle Blight (RBNB) and that there had been a small but good response in support of this proposal. Staff at FR's Northern Research Station had agreed to receive samples of needles in respect of suspect RBNB for diagnostic testing and to provide feedback on results. Andy Sharkey thought that it would be a good idea if Non Governmental Organisations (NGO's) were involved in the surveys as well.

Pine Tree Lappet Moth

Chris also reported that there was concern in the Highlands for restrictions regarding the movement of conifer roundwood with bark during the summer months to guard against the spread of Pine Tree Lappet Moth (*Dendromilus pini*).

10. Any Other Business

Hugh Clayden informed the meeting members that the European Commission's plans to ban the chemical asulam, which is used to control bracken, were blocked by a number of member states, including the UK. He felt that the EU needed to be careful regarding its intentions to ban certain pesticides as they were useful control options and if a number of them were banned helicopter spraying companies may cease investing in the equipment needed to apply the chemicals.

Nick Boulton raised some questions about the chain of custody regarding controlled wood of ash being imported to the EU from the USA. Some exporters appeared to be stating that as the sawmills, in which the material was processed, were in an area known to be free of the pest Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) (*Agrilus planipennis*) then the material should be considered to have 'originated' in an area known to be free of EAB. Ian Brownlee commented that his understanding was that the 'origin' of the material referred to the source compartment in the forest, so that a trace back of the material could be facilitated to the growing site and not the processing sawmill, which could be some distance away. He added that he couldn't understand how Plant Health Inspectors in the USA could issue export phytosanitary certificates for the material if they didn't know the origin of it. The Inspectors could not legitimately make the declaration on the certificates that the wood originated in an area known to be free of EAB if they did not know the source forest in which the ash trees were grown and where they could have been infested with the pest.

Nick Boulton agreed to discuss the matter further with Ian Brownlee if it was necessary.

Andy Sharkey reported that the revision of the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme (UKWAS) put the onus on woodland owners to be aware of risks from pests and diseases and to take action. It was considered that woodland owners and managers should be using the most up to date guidance.

11. Date for the next meeting

The next meeting would be held in early September. Stewart Snape will contact meeting members via email to agree a suitable date and advise of the venue.

Action: Stewart Snape to email members to agree a suitable date and venue for the next meeting which would take place in early September.