

## **NATIVE WOODLANDS HABITAT ACTION PLANS SCOTTISH PARTNERSHIP**

**Minutes of meeting held at the Silvan House, 231 Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh.  
Thursday, 13 November 2003**

### **Present:**

Gordon Patterson (GP) – FC (Chair)	Peter Quelch (PQ) – FC (Technical Secretary)
Richard Thompson (RT) – FC (NRS)	Sallie Ballie (SB) – FC (Forestry Group)
Moira Baptie (MB) – FC (FE)	John Craig (JC) – DCS
Jonathan Hughes (JH) – WT (am only)	Scott Wilson (SW) – Consultant Forester & Forest Ecologist
Craig Campbell (CC) – NFUS	Duncan Stone (DS) - SNH
Mike Wood (MW) – RSPB/LINK	Jamie Farquhar (JF) – FTA
Athol McDonald (AMcD) – FC (Secretary)	

### **Apologies:**

Kate Holl (KH) – SNH	Jo Lenthall (JL) – Scottish LBAP Co-ordinator
Andrew Barbour (AB) – SLF	Donald Bailey (DB) – SEERAD
Graeme Morison (GM) – SNW	

### **1. Introductions**

GP welcomed everyone to the meeting in particular Dr Scott Wilson who was attending for the first time. He would represent both professional forestry and ecology interests.

### **2. Minutes of previous meeting (2 September, 2003)**

These were accepted as an accurate record.

### **3. Matters Arising**

*AP 1: deferred to early 2004; FCS to give group a chance to attend and to explore joint issues with SEPA.*

*AP 2: deferred.*

*AP 3: done*

*AP 4: deferred: Mike Wood to progress*

*AP 5: done.*

*A P 6: done- see item 4*

*A P 7: done-see item 4*

*AP 8: done -initial stage,see item 8*

*AP 9: partly done see item 9*

*AP 10: done paper tabled instead of personal appearance by Simon Hodge: see below.*

*AP 11: done see item 5*

*AP 12: done*

### **CAP reform - update**

Simon Hodge' information paper was discussed - CC pointed out what he considered to be errors and suggested the paper should be amended, lest some of the misinterpretations gain currency: - See Annex for full details of comments and amendments.

**AP 1.** GP to check with Simon Hodge on intention to update Info Note or not and inform members.

**AP 2** GP & CC to keep members informed of progress of Good Agricultural & Environmental Condition working group + circulate papers before meetings if possible. If time permits seek views on scrub & grazing issues before GAEC meeting on 3 December.

### **Favourable Condition**

A draft report on defining favourable condition and sample it within non-SSSI woodlands in the new proposed National Inventory of Woodland and Trees (NIWT2) has been completed by Mike Smith. It was still at an early stage, and had been circulated on October 8<sup>th</sup> to the UK Group members as it was a UK wide project. The SNWHAP members had also received it by email and comments were welcome in parallel.

**AP 3** Members to send any comments to Sallie Bailey of Forestry Group, FC by 29 November.

JF questioned the practical application of this type of work and how it was going to help deliver the Scottish Forestry Strategy. GP assured him that this sort of monitoring was an essential requirement, and that although these draft discussion papers were necessarily rather long, the resulting methodology for monitoring would need to be more straightforward.

JC drew attention to current DCS/FCS/SNH work assessing impacts of deer on natural heritage in priority areas such as Natura sites. This should be relevant to the favourable condition definition.

### **Lowland Mixed Broadleaves HAP – Targets**

Agreed that targets needed to be in proportion to the Scottish share of the resource. The UK group had agreed to submit this plan and the birchwoods HAP together for publication, once this minor change had been made.

**AP 4.** GP to circulate suggested revised target for restoration which would be reduced from the previous draft figure.

### **Terms of Reference for the Group (Paper 3/03)**

GP led a discussion on revised terms of reference. Main points: -

- Potential Confusion over name (very similar to Scottish Native Woods) It was agreed that the name of the Group should become Native Woodlands Partnership for Scotland (NWPS)
- Scottish Biodiversity Strategy – there are strong links to the SBS subgroups in our work, but should we be more closely aligned, even one of those groups? GP felt it was too early to decide that.
- Level of responsibility for SAP's –we should try to integrate advice from SAP lead partners but not to take responsibility away from them.
- Role of group (grant people to be involved)
- LBAP representation – agreed that PQ would consult Jo Lenthall on who should represent LBAPOs.
- FC website should be used as a host site for a distinct set of information on native woods HAP's
- **Additional membership**

PQ gave a brief resume on opportunities investigated. Glad to have Scott Wilson on board.

Possibility of corresponding Member status for ICF and the pinewoods managers group and woodland officer/national office grant representative for relevant issues at meetings. Community forest owners should be invited and Plantlife as an important NGO could be considered also.

LBAP representation is still not resolved.

**AP 5:** MW to write to Jo Lenthall to ask her to nominate an LBAP woodland representative. GP/PQ To take stock (after meeting)

## **5. Native Woodland Training Courses (Paper 7/03)**

PQ gave the group an update on progress re topics/handouts. Rachel and Peter are working on a web based searchable database that would lead the searcher to best advice material on any woodland biodiversity topic, to be ready for the training course in May 2004

DS asked if there would be a deer management session as the Deer Fencing Policy would be published by May 2004.

Other topics discussed:

Sharing of courses- same agenda as SNH for example.

Sharing speakers ; some felt there were too many different speakers in the outline plan

Quality control

Satellite courses

Discussed accreditation and the idea of these courses counting for CPD etc. Something to discuss with FTS on a more general basis.

JC Move course around country regionally – this was agreed, first to be in Fort Augustus.

**AP 6.** Comments to PQ on course content and structure by end of November.

## **6. Progress reports**

RT gave a brief resume on Forest Habitats Network. Pilot is being undertaken in Borders & West Lothian. Different criteria and approaches. Also Duncan Ray is working on a project for the whole of Wales.

PQ produced paper of main projects being worked on at present. Taken over the role of Biodiversity Advisor from 1 April 2003 working on all types of forest biodiversity, as well as native woodland habitats and species. GP encouraged members to submit one page summaries like this in future.

## **7. Native Woodland Inventory (Paper 4/03)**

GP outlined the paper. Main points: -

- SW: Cost assumptions large but still too optimistic. If ecological knowledge were needed for the surveyors then the cost per day would need to be higher. Decisions would be needed by February to start work in the early part of the field season.
- Keys needs have to be identified to enable the optimal cost/benefit balance to be reached. The coverage of small woods and features such as veteran trees was an important factor.
- Partnership funding opportunities need to be identified.

**AP 7:** Comments on the paper to GP by 19 November 2003

## **8. Review of Native Woodlands & Future Needs (Paper 5/03)**

GP presented the paper, and members agreed the course of action proposed.

## **9. Prorities for 3-year group work programme (Paper 6/03)**

PQ presented this paper, which consisted of a list of items from the open discussion at the last meeting. Group has a role to work out programme and there would be a need to contact other potential actors like utility companies/bodies and MoD, SEPA.

**AP 8:** PQ to develop a draft programme after Xmas, circulating members for comment, and present to the March meeting.

## **10. AOB**

CC: We should discuss our role in the Moorland Forum and Uplands HAP group at our next meeting .

DS: An SNH/FCS project on balance of land use was underway which would assist in this area.

## **11. Date of next meeting**

The date of the next meeting had already been agreed as 9 March 2003. A subsequent 2 day visit was suggested for late June/early August 2003. It was agreed that meetings should be held at 4 monthly intervals and incorporated in the Terms of Reference

**AP:** AMcD to circulate dates to members and agree date with GP.

The meeting closed at 16.00.

**Peter Quelch and Gordon Patterson**  
**24 December 2003.**

### **Annex**

#### **Comments from Craig Campbell on CAP reform and forestry information paper (comments sent to Simon Hodge)**

##### **"National Envelope"**

Should say: "This is to be used to encourage specific types .....environment, or for improving ....."

Additionally, the point should be made, at the third bullet, that such objectives could also be pursued under Pillar II support.

Set-aside

Suggest: "Existing set-aside planted ..... will continue to count towards fulfilment of the obligation, as will new planting. Only insofar as woodland, or new woodland, is an energy crop, will such land be eligible for the new set-aside entitlement."

##### **Modulation**

Suggest: "Additional national modulation may be matched £ for £ by HM Treasury, but the existing commitment is only good for the remaining period of the current Public Expenditure Round. It is widely believed that the current administration would be willing to extend that commitment up to a limit of 10 per cent national modulation. However, this has not been confirmed."

##### **Cross compliance**

Suggest deletion of the second bullet point as the fourth point contradicts it, correctly. More generally, there is an issue about interpretation of the overall element of GAEC, which is that there should not be any significant reduction in permanent pasture. At farm level, regional level, national level? And what would be "significant"?

The SFF subgroup has written to Bob advocating either a derogation or coverage in the Implementing Regulation that would allow some trees to be planted for landscape or environmental benefit without penalty to SPS eligibility. To allow more extensive afforestation, we need as big a percentage allowance as possible on the most extensive definition of pasture that we can get - and for this to be applied at a Scottish level, not at a local level.

##### **SPS**

The third bullet contains a reference to 20 per cent of farmland afforested. Please explain, as I can't find any reference to this in the Regulation."