

Pine-tree Lappet Moth Outbreak Management Team

Minutes of Sixth Meeting held on 18 May 2011

Silvan House, Edinburgh

Present:

Stewart Snape, Deputy Head of Plant Health (Chair)

Stuart A'Hara, Molecular Biologist, Forest Research

Hugh Clayden, Policy Adviser, Forestry Commission Scotland, Silvan House

Joan Cottrell, Programme Group Manager, Forest Research

Chris Inglis, Executive Director and Company Secretary, ConFor

John Morgan, Head of Plant Health

Roger Moore, Senior Scientific Officer, Forest Research

Tom Prescott, Species Conservation Officer, Butterfly Conservation

Steve Smith, Planning Manager, Inverness, Ross & Skye FD

Athayde Tonhasca, Species Adviser, Scottish Natural Heritage

Richard Wallace, Development and Operations Advisor, Highland Conservancy (by telecon)

Sheila Inglis, Secretary

Debbie Erskine, Secretary

Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Introductions

1. Stewart welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from:

David Barbour, Consultant Entomologist

David Jardine, FDM, Inverness, Ross & Skye FD

Paul Munro, Press Officer, FC Scotland

Ian Murgatroyd, Regional Manager North, Plant Health

Stewart added that Steve Smith, Planning Manager, Inverness, Ross & Skye FD was attending in place of David Jardine.

Agenda Item 2: Minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 December 2010

2. The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 20 December 2010 were agreed.

Agenda Item 3: Matters Arising

Action points outstanding from the fourth meeting held on 25 August 2011:

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Agenda Item 3: Matters arising

Item 9: SNH Update

Athayade Tonhasca explained that Robin Payne had sent a memo to the SNH Management Team, which set out the background on the latest developments on P-tL, and recommendations to OMT members.

Action: Athayde to ask Robin Payne to circulate the memo that had been sent to the SNH Management Team, which set out the background on the latest developments on P-tL, and recommendations to OMT members.

Item 10: Communications and Publicity

Stewart reported that Charlton Clark, GB Press Officer, had confirmed that the Q&A had been updated and re-published on the Commission's website.

Item 7: Discussion on Future Direction and Required Actions

Stewart confirmed that Felix Karthus (Border Consultants) had business interests in Latvia and Estonia and may be able to assist if FR get in touch with him.

The Team suggested that samples may be obtained via the 'Russian insects' website.

**Action:
Stuart/Joan to contact Felix Karthaus.**

Joan to seek specimens of P-tL via the 'Russian insects' websites. OMT members to advise of any other such websites.

Stewart confirmed that Ian Murgatroyd had produced an analysis of spraying methods and added that he would circulate a copy to OMT members.

Action: Stewart to send a copy of Ian Murgatroyd's analysis of spraying methods to OMT members.

Action points outstanding from the fifth meeting held on 20 December 2011:

Item 5: Research Update: Origin of the Moth

Tom confirmed that he had contacted colleagues about trapping in Tentsmuir and that he had been in contact with Aigas who had confirmed that P-tL had been recorded there. This would be discussed later in the agenda.

Action: Tom to organise trapping at Tentsmuir.

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Agenda Item 7: Research Synthesis: What level of risk does P-tL pose?

Roger confirmed that he had provided Hugh with costs for soil analysis work and that he had collected eggs to rear and study the growth rate of the caterpillars in field conditions.

Agenda Item 9: Discussion

Stewart confirmed that Ian Murgatroyd had developed a good licencing protocol.

Richard confirmed that he had inspected the P-tL rearing facilities being run by Roy Leverton and Mark Young and, other than a security issue at the latter which had now been resolved, both facilities were acceptable. He added that Tom Prescott's facilities had also been inspected and they too were satisfactory. Roger confirmed that NRS' facilities had been inspected and were satisfactory.

Hugh confirmed that he and Roger had discussed funding for glue banding and that funds were available.

Agenda Item 4: FCS Update

Hugh reported that:

- timber movement restrictions were causing serious difficulties for the trade and that timber spraying and extending the control area to include sawmills should be considered;
- he had circulated a letter from Dietrich Pannwitz, Forester for Sylvestrus Ltd, about visits to pine forests in Germany and the relevance of their management prescriptions to the current outbreak in Scotland. The letter included a list of findings and conclusions, including one that the Commission should seek funding from the Scottish or UK government to support insecticide application and any other relevant control methods;
- FCS would brief Scottish ministers on the latest position and recommendations;
- FCS had hosted a constructive meeting with representatives from BCS, FR, CFS and Aberdeen University to exchange information. Hugh had summarised those areas that merited further investigation;
- Aigas' claim that they had consistently recorded P-tL for 35 years and had always considered it to be native; Stewart Snape emphasised the need for this to be corroborated before it could be considered seriously; and
- he was arranging a meeting with SEPA, SNH and Hugh Evans to discuss the practical restrictions, what would be achieved and costs of spraying and other options.

Agenda Item 5: Research Update

Stuart gave a PowerPoint presentation about the results of examining whether molecular evidence could help identify whether the Scottish P-tL population was native or non-native. Results concluded that the Scottish and south east Russian samples were the closest match and that it was now important to test samples from the Balkans and Eurasia.

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Hugh asked for the Team's thanks to be recorded for all FR's effort in their sampling and analysis work.

Action:

Tom Prescott to attempt to identify contacts in the Balkans and Eurasia, and Roger to identify contacts in Russia, for Joan to approach for samples for DNA testing.

Roger to obtain costs for incubators for analysing the growth rate of P-tL throughout its life cycle, and then discuss funding with Hugh Clayden. Roger would consider Joan's suggestion to attempt to force larvae from southern Europe to adopt a 2-year life cycle.

[Agenda Item 6: lunch]

Agenda Item 7: Research Update

Roger Moore gave a PowerPoint presentation and discussed his results. He noted that:

- glue banding results confirmed that three new breeding sites had been discovered in spring 2011 although there were a lower number of captures in spring 2011 than in spring 2010; and
- it was proposed to sample sites in areas with lower winter rainfall in an attempt to locate remnant populations.

Tom Prescott was asked to say a bit more about the Aigas claim. He reported that they:

- had caught a male and female;
- didn't keep records as they employed mainly seasonal staff;
- had been catching P-tL for 35 years; and
- assumed it was native therefore didn't report it.

The Team agreed the following actions:

Action:

Tom Prescott would attempt to contact Martin Waller, original finder and identifier of P-tL at Aigas in the mid 70s.

Richard Wallace would ask Dietrich Pannwitz how he had become aware of the Aigas claim.

Agenda Item 8: Next Steps

Stewart invited comments on next steps and the Team agreed that:

- it was important to corroborate the Aigas claim before the information could be seriously considered.

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- movement restrictions would remain in force;
- the pest risk analysis should be reviewed to consider control options;
- the area and timing of woodland to be felled at the new sub-station at Beaully for the new power line should be established;
- SNH should consider providing funding for more intensive population monitoring;
- an article about P-tL should be drafted for a ConFor publication;
- a specific risk assessment on timber transport should be carried out; and
- information should be obtained to find out whether P-tL was a pest on the continent in the countries included in the Group 2 cluster.

Action:

Richard Wallace to contact SSE re woodland felling proposals at the new sub-station at Beaully for the new power line.

Athayde Tonhasca to enquire about the possibility of SNH providing funding for more intensive population monitoring in the main 'outbreak' area. (to determine if there are further breeding populations). Indicative cost – £25k.

Chris Inglis/Hugh Clayden to draft an article about P-tL for a ConFor publication.

Stewart Snapeto review the Pest Risk Analysis for P-tL and circulate it to OMT members for comment; to consider carrying out a specific risk assessment on timber transport; and to enquire with International Policy whether they could obtain information about P-tL being a pest on the continent in those countries included in the DNA Group 2 cluster.

Any Other Business

No other business was raised.

Date of Next Meeting

The Team agreed that the next meeting should be held in September.

Action: Stewart Snape to suggest dates for Sheila Inglis to circulate to secure the next P-tL OMT meeting in September.

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Summary of Actions

Agenda Item 3: Matters Arising

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Agenda Item 3: Matters arising

Agenda Item 9: SNH Update

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Agenda Item 7: Discussion on Future Direction and Required Actions

Stuart/Joan to contact Felix Karthaus.

Joan to seek specimens of P-tL via the 'Russian insects' websites. OMT members to advise of any other such websites.

Stewart to send a copy of Ian Murgatroyd's analysis of spraying methods to OMT members.

Action points outstanding from the fifth meeting held on 20 December 2011:

Agenda Item 5: Research Update: Origin of the Moth

Tom to organise trapping at Tentsmuir.

Agenda Item 5: Research Update

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Roger to obtain costs for incubators for analysing the growth rate of P-tL throughout its life cycle, and then discuss funding with Hugh Clayden. Roger would consider Joan's suggestion to attempt to force larvae from southern Europe to adopt a 2-year life cycle.

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Agenda Item 8: Next Steps

Richard to contact SSE re the area and timing of felling proposals for the new sub-station at Beauly for the new power line.

Athayde to enquire about the possibility of SNH providing funding for more intensive population monitoring in the main 'outbreak' area. Indicative cost – £25k.

Chris/Hugh to draft an article about P-tL for a ConFor publication.

Stewart to review the Pest Risk Analysis for P-tL and circulate it to OMT members for comment, to consider carrying out a specific risk assessment on timber transport and to enquire with International Policy whether they could obtain information about P-tL being a pest on the continent in those countries included in the DNA Group 2 cluster.

Date of Next Meeting

Stewart to suggest dates for Sheila to circulate to secure the next P-tL OMT meeting in September.