



**Minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Biodiversity Delivery Group**  
**held on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at 2pm**  
**in the Silverdale Room, Department of Environment, Food & Agriculture,**  
**This Slieau Whallian, St Johns**

**Present:**

Jan Gledhill – Independent Chair	(JG)
Aline Thomas – Interim Senior Biodiversity Officer, DEFA	(AT)
Richard Selman – Ecosystem Policy Manager, DEFA	(RS)
Hannah Cawkwell – Environmental Officer, Manx Utilities (MU)	(HC)
Leigh Morris – CEO, Manx Wildlife Trust	(LM)
Erica Spencer – Environmental Planner and Ecologist, Manx National Heritage	(ES)

**Observing:**

Robbie Christian – Flockmasters	(RC)
Dan Creer – Flockmasters	(DC)

JG welcomed RC and DC to their first BDG meeting.

**In attendance:**

Louise Samson – Biodiversity Warden (minutes)	(LS)
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**23.01 Apologies**

John Payne, Ken Milne, Andrew Lees, David Bellamy and Neil Morris

**23.02 Consideration of the minutes of the meeting held on the 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022 (Paper A)**

Minutes from 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022 were agreed and accepted.

**23.03 Actions and matters arising from the October 2022 meeting**

*Action 1 (Mar 2022) - ES to get an update on the Curraghs Management plan and feedback to the BDG*

*Action 2 (July 2022) ES to get an update on the Curraghs Management plan and feedback to the BDG*

*Action 3 (July 2022) Ballaugh Curraghs Management Plan to be put on the agenda for the next BDG meeting and ES to circulate the draft plan to the group by the end of September.*

*Action 2 (Oct 2022) ES to provide an update on the Curraghs Management Plan as soon as she is able to.*

*Action 3 (Oct 2022) Ballaugh Curragh Management Plan to be put on the agenda once ES has received feedback from MNH Senior Management Team.*

ES provided the following update on these outstanding Actions: MNH CEO and Senior Management Team have reviewed the Ballaugh Curragh Management Plan (MP) and will be providing feedback fairly soon. ES reported that there are opportunities for funding for the management. LM added that the next MNH/MWT meeting will be about Ballaugh Curragh (Action for Wildlife Project). The MP should be co-ordinated between MWT and MNH as landowners. ES

said there was a lot to discuss with regard to MP and the MP framework was the start of the discussion.

In amalgamation of the above, Action 1 of March 2022 is carried forward.

*Action 4 (Oct 2022) Change the status of task 9F to green – COMPLETE.*

*Action 5 (Oct 2022) - Ecosystem Policy Team to submit a paper to the next BDG meeting to compare what climate change duties are in our Wildlife Act and Climate Change Act, compared to duties under other UK legislation, and for consideration about whether the action for a more robust duty has been achieved – started not yet complete.*

Action 5 (Oct 2022) carried over to the next BDG meeting.

LM reported that Action for Wildlife exists and the website is about to go live. It is an Island-wide scheme, championed by MWT and MWT are planning a soft launch. The highlight will be the Curragh Partnership working. RS queried the soft launch and suggested it needed a full launch to maximise funding. There is potential for the Minister/Member to launch in line with the Biodiversity Strategy in a couple of months' time.

#### **23.04 Report on biodiversity crisis motion in Tynwald on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

RS reported on the following:

*The Hon. Member for Garff, Mrs Caine, to move:*

*That Tynwald acknowledges the global biodiversity and ecological crisis and supports Biosphere Isle of Man's vision for a sustainable future.*

*Dr Haywood proposed an amended motion:*

*That Tynwald acknowledges the global biodiversity and ecological crisis and recommits its support of the Island's 2015 Biodiversity Strategy, which aims to:*

- *Manage biodiversity changes to minimise loss of species and habitats;*
- *Maintain, restore and enhance native biodiversity; and*
- *Involve society in understanding, appreciating and safeguarding biodiversity.*

The amended motion was approved. The CBD CoP has closed with 4 goals and 23 targets agreed. The Kunming-Montreal global biodiversity framework will be used as a strategic plan for the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols, from 2022–2030, to better align and direct the work of the various bodies of the Convention/Protocols.

#### **23.05 Update on the outcome of UN Biodiversity Conference COP 15 – the Kunming – Montreal Global Biodiversity Agreement (Paper B)**

Paper B Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework was circulated prior to the meeting. RS added that at COP 15 they also discussed the number of items to be monitored, for which the UK delegation was seeking a reduction, a benefit to smaller nations, and we await reporting from the UK. JG asked if our Strategy required a review following COP 15 and RS replied that it was a political decision but some form of review may be appropriate to update the actions. Currently the targets for our strategy are 5 years behind the CBD and so a review now could bring the Isle of Man in line with the CBD. EPT is to make contact with DEFRA regarding the outcomes of the COP 15 and the requirements for monitoring the targets that resulted from the conference.

## **23.06 Progress in delivery of actions within the Delivery Plan for 2022/23 (Paper C) – all members to report on status of tasks as appropriate before or at the meeting.**

JG asked that the Delivery Plan is kept up-to-date and reports on tasks are submitted, there are many outstanding actions.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Update</b>
7A/39B	HC reported that the MU are making progress with the Environment Management System. This is a major, high-level, strategic project to deliver an environmental constraints map for staff to refer to. The mapping section is one part of the project and encouraging staff to use it is another. A discussion was held over mapping land and ensuring that ownership boundaries are mapped correctly. It was suggested that all MU assets are put on the Mann GIS Environment map. MWT reserves are on the Environment map. MNH land is not on the Environment map. It was suggested that MNH/MU land was added to the Environment map with a declaration that the ownership boundary may not be accurate in order to get past hold-ups relating to clarity. LM added that including MNH land would assist in achieving the 30x30 CBD target for land managed for nature conservation.

The MU contracted MWT to draft a report for the North Barrule-Ballure Catchment looking at biodiversity, habitats and peat. MU plan to maintain and improve the site. The land is tenanted but the tenancy is being reviewed. The land met the criteria for ASSI designation for four criteria including fungi and woodland. The tenant will be informed and this will assist in AES delivery if desired. LM said the survey work will assist in identifying suitable areas for tree planting, habitat creation and lobbying the Agriculture Team for more money for the uplands.

AT provided an update on DEFA Actions and reported that everything is progressing and there was nothing in particular to add.

LM provided annotated updates on their tasks listed in the Delivery Plan to AT. LM provided the following verbal update for MWT.

- Nature Conservation Forum – make group more proactive in reporting on work that member organisations are delivering for the Biodiversity Strategy.
- MWT are establishing a separate trading company for their consultancy work that will come into fruition on the 1<sup>st</sup> February that should enable MWT to have Interested Party Status for Planning Appeals.
- Hartford Homes are leading the way on Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) at the moment and they are willing to share their experience with DEFA Ecosystem Policy Team (EPT) staff but not with their competitors.
- A new Recorder Officer starts on the 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023 under a DEFA contract.
- MWT have been awarded the Calf of Man contract in principle. This contract is for an initial 3 years with the potential to extend for 2 years.
- All NGO's are aiming to get a draft State of Nature to Minister Barber by the 28<sup>th</sup> April; the Minister will be invited to write the forward. RS added that he had been in touch with the UK State of Nature group, who are including a 6 page section on UK territories; they said they would try to include a link to the IoM State of Nature.
- A shag colour-ringing project has been underway on the Calf for the past two seasons; RS asked what aspect of shag ecology was being studied and ES said she would forward RS all the information.

- LM is now a Council Member for the UK Overseas Territories Conservation Forum.
- The Biosphere Artist in residence ends soon, this has gone well and MWT will be applying for it again.
- MWT are advertising for a new education officer following Dawn Colley's retirement. Leigh noted that most charity education officers aren't teachers, but trained teachers can be useful for secondary level, and the job could potentially be split.
- MWT have been delivery partners for the AES for 22 months and they are very happy with the progress and engagement with farmers is very positive; there have been feedback sessions. LM asked RC and DC if there was any feedback from the Flockmasters on AES and they replied they are waiting for the uplands scheme to enable them to get involved. As a group Flockmasters has 12-15 members and focuses on Above the Mountain Line (AML), some members do farm land below the mountain line. AML comes under Stewardship and you have to commit to traditional grazing, burning and management, nothing is available for tree planting or even peat habitat improvements, but those projects are cost intensive. North Barrule is a good example of best management practice. Danny Creer fenced the turbaries voluntarily with no funding but now cannot graze that area and so loss of income. LM would like the Ecosystem Policy Team (EPT) and the Agriculture Team to work closer on AES. A new Climate Change Peat Officer has just been advertised and Forestry are recruiting an Uplands Ranger. Flockmasters cannot do much without DEFA permission because DEFA are the landowners.
- MWT commissioned an ecological consultancy specialising in drones with thermal imaging cameras to undertake an accurate wallaby count in and around Ballaugh Curragh. MWT plan to release the data in Invasive Non Native Species (INNS) week in May. MWT will be undertaking a survey of landowners close to the Curragh to get their views on the wallabies. MWT did some wallaby scat analysis to determine their diet but unfortunately it was compared to an American dataset and so wasn't usable. ES raised that the wallabies could have positive and negative impacts. The findings of the wallaby survey will be used in the Ballaugh Curragh MP, trial exclusions etc.

No one from DOI or MBL were available to report updates. Neil Morris has resigned from MBL and RS said Neil would be carrying on with MBL, on the Board and in a supporting role for the time being, undertaking any data requests, etc. Some of the MBL tasks may have been completed but no comments have been received.

### **23.07 Update on the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) leaders**

AT provided the update. Two meetings were held last autumn to decide on Priority Habitats. DEFA are looking to adopt the UK Habitats list. EPT are consulting with Planning, Agriculture and Lands and the MNFU and FWAG. There are eight terrestrial BAPs and six marine BAPs near complete. JG asked how they would be used and AT replied they would be put on the Manx Biodiversity website (run by the Manx Biological Recording Partnership) and LM will discuss with RS about updating the website. The BAPs will be used to support funding through AES and there is potential for funding through corporate sponsorship. More BAPs are on the way. The BAP leaders meeting is in February. DC asked what Priority Habitats are and the purpose and AT replied they are referred to in the Biodiversity Strategy and the Island Strategic Plan and that we didn't have an agreed set of habitats but this has now been set up. Paul Fletcher and Shaun Gelling are BAP leads for farmland and RC and DC were encouraged to feed in to these.

### **23.08 To note minutes of the Manx Nature Conservation Forum held on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2022 (Paper D)**

The minutes were circulated prior to the meeting. Andy Cooper had provided a summary on the Agri-Environment Scheme. The next meeting is themed on Biodiversity Net Gain with Steve Butler, Head of Development Management, Planning & Building Control Directorate. Invasive Non Native Species (INNS) will also be discussed. Meeting dates for this year are set. Flockmasters have been invited in the past and AT invited DC and RC to join future Manx Nature Conservation Forum meetings.

### **23.09 Any other business**

None reported.

### **23.10 Dates of next meetings**

The following dates were proposed:

- Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023 at 2pm.
- Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> May at 2pm or Monday 15<sup>th</sup> May at 2pm – avoiding three Bank Holidays in May.
- Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> Aug at 2pm
- Monday 20<sup>th</sup> Nov at 2pm

**Action 1:** The next meeting will be on the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2023 and updates on tasks listed in the Delivery Plan should be submitted to AT by Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

The 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023 was chosen due to the release of the wallaby report in INNS week.

The meeting ended at 15:21

Signed: J. Hedderley [Chair]

Date: 27/3/23

