

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Biodiversity Targets Advisory Group

Title: Biodiversity Targets Advisory Group (BTAG) Minutes

Date: 28th April 2021

Attendees: Rosie Hails --(Chair), Mel Austen, Ian Hodge, Penny Johnes, James Wood, Core Defra group officials.

1. Terrestrial Targets Update

- 1.1. UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) are moving forward with their work developing a species target. This will include looking at recovery times for species and also starting to develop trajectories for Species and Protected Sites over the 20 year timeframe.
- 1.2. Defra have been drawing together the evidence for the biodiversity targets

2. Marine Update

- 2.1. Defra provided a brief update on the main Marine work packages:
 - Route map for conducting assessments
 - Multiyear Marine Protected Area (MPA) survey prioritisation programme
 - Gap analysis for MPA feature condition indicators
 - Improved approach to inferring condition based on proxy evidence
 - MPA reporting platform
 - MPA feature recoverability assessment

3. Biodiversity Targets Workshop Outputs

- 3.1. Biodiversity workshops held with Defra Group Experts throughout March focused on the feasibility of a range of target ambitions and the actions that are required to deliver them.
- 3.2. BTAG provided positive feedback about the workshops and suggested some areas for Defra to focus on. These included the social and economic interventions, buy in and behaviour change, and developing a more integrated picture of the delivery mechanisms.
- 3.3. BTAG reported back from the Defra SAC meeting in March 2021 which commended Biodiversity for the pace at which the targets are being developed, recognising the complexity of the task.

4. Format of the Marine Protected Areas Target

- 4.1. NE/JNCC presented an update on the MPA target evidence base and associated decisions. This included a summary of the six work packages. Points discussed were: the overall route map; aspect of monitoring, assessing and reporting for multi purposes; and recoverability.
- 4.2. Options were presented for the proposed type and format of the target, which ranged from a descriptive target to quantitative target, that combined inshore and offshore elements.

- 4.3. BTAG supported a quantitative target approach which looked at recovery trends. Noting consideration needed for the scale of recovery trends. Clarity on recovery and monitoring were important to consider. BTAG were also interested in the combination of inshore and offshore elements and what this means from a reporting perspective.
- 4.4. Options were also presented for the parameters used for setting and measuring targets. Transparency was a key factor for any option chosen and that effective communication was going to be an essential part of the messaging around this.