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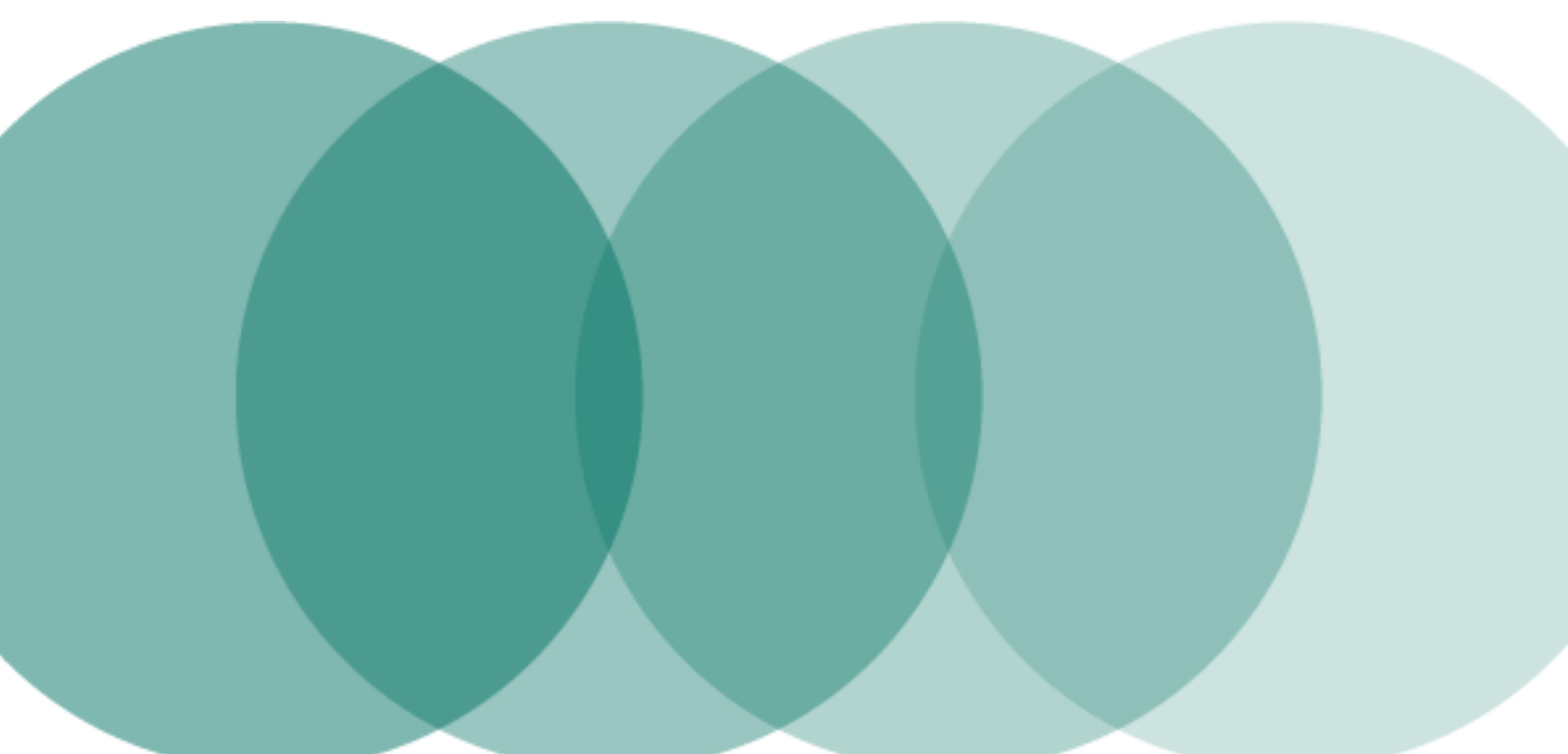
Home Office



CPS

MoJ Sustainable Operations

Bio-security Strategy and Policy



April 2016

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1 INTRODUCTION

Biosecurity is a strategic and integrated approach that encompasses our policy and objectives, which analyse and manage risks on our estate for animals, plant life health, and environmental sensitive sites. Our biosecurity covers the introduction of plant pests, animal pests, diseases, and the introduction and management of invasive alien species and genotypes. Biosecurity is a holistic concept of direct relevance to the sustainability of agriculture & horticulture, food safety, and the protection of the natural environment, its ecosystems and our overall biodiversity.

“The Ministry of Justice Shared estate is steadfast in protecting its sensitive environmental estate, specifically its designated sites, its tree, plant and livestock production units, and halting the spread of plant and animal diseases and alien species which could affect the future protection and enhancement of our native species. Wherever possible within our strategy and aims we will liaise and engage with local communities and like-minded organisations as part of our wider social and community vision in creating a more secure and intrinsic valuable estate”

1.1 POLICY REVIEW

The Biosecurity Strategy and Policy will be linked through our Strategy for Biodiversity and Pollinators, as well as our Woodland Statement; and actively managed in our Biodiversity Action Planning, as well as our rural proofing, which will support our ecological services across our shared estate. We will review and revise our biosecurity Strategy for compliance with our lead partners, stake holders and operational holdings every 3 years or as our operational estate dictates.

1.2 POLICY AIM

To protect our native animals and plants from pests and diseases that have been highlighted by the Governments lead agencies for direct action, and building an awareness campaign that demonstrates the risks from these pests and diseases; to promote how to encompass these actions within local policy, and introduce a system of management that will incentivise risk reduction at all our environmental sensitive sites.

2 STAKEHOLDER & PARTNER ENGAGEMENT

We consider it's crucial to engage our lead partners and stakeholders as well, as local communities, so that they can understand the importance of biosecurity; and how they can make a real and substantial difference to their environment for the protection of biodiversity and the natural landscape.

We will therefore engage with our lead partners and stakeholders at every opportunity through education, training and practical projects that demonstrate positive values to biosecurity; whilst embedding professional standards and training for staff and offenders by:

- 2.1 Continuing its national partnership with the Animal and Plant Health Agency, Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage and national and locally led wildlife trusts and societies, which focus on animal and plant protection especially priority species.
- 2.2 Increasing wider opportunities for our staff and offenders to extend their skills base and become mentors and biosecurity champions.
- 2.3 Raising awareness of good practice and personal achievements, which will incentivise positive action for change to our biosecurity management.

This policy was issued to the Government's lead on biosecurity for animals and plant health, and the Government's wildlife advisors as well as our stakeholders and partners. Contributions received have been added to the policy where this has been relevant, realistic and meaningful to the MoJ Shared Estate.

All our key stakeholders were consulted in the development of this policy, those of which appear below:

- The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)
- Natural England, Natural Resources Wales & Scottish Natural Heritage
- MoJ Ecology Coordinators
- MoJ Designated Sites
- SDM, REMs, and FM Providers

3 DESIGNATED SITES & SITES OF BIODIVERSITY SIGNIFICANCE

The MoJ Estate is a rich biological diverse estate, with 10 nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), 3 of which are European designated sites, which include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), including 2 Ramsar sites, noted for their international importance for wetlands and wading birds. In addition, we have over 39 sites which adjoin and border SSSIs as well as more than 60 plus sites of local rural biodiversity significance including local Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs).

The MoJ Ecology network who monitor and report on all of the MoJ designated sites, also liaise directly with the APHA, together with those authorities who are responsible for notifying and designating SSSIs. Through an annual liaison meeting with APHA, the MoJ Shared estate Sustainable Operations Team will identify any new threats and any existing migrating threats that may put in jeopardy the health and wellbeing of our native animals and plants on our diverse shared estate.

Designated sites still remain a high priority across the MoJ Shared estate, and our past and future work will be invaluable as we lay down the foundations of our biosecurity strategy and policy to protect our environmentally sensitive sites and our natural landscape.

Delivering through a network of professionals and volunteers, will not only provide a secure future for these biodiverse rich sites, but instil the need to maintain the sites environmental security.

- 3.1.1 Through site surveys we will engage with the UK National Biodiversity Network; and through a set of indicators, we will monitor across each designated site its impacts on the surrounding landscape; and how engagement through ecosystem services will deliver practical outcomes that will create a robust bio-secure estate.
- 3.1.2 All designated sites on the MoJ estate must agree and implement a local policy for biosecurity within their Site Management Agreement (SMA) liaising with APHA and local regional inspectors, so that they are in a position to actively

manage biosecurity risks on site that may damage the scientific and biological importance of the site.

- 3.1.3** All designated sites on the MoJ estate must make sure that an objective for biosecurity appears across the board for all Local Biodiversity Action Plans, and prepare these objectives to be audited every 3 years; remaining where operationally practical “Fully Compliant”.

3.2 HONEY BEES (POLLINATORS)

Maintaining a national database on apiaries across the MoJ Shared estate and linking through the National Bee Unit and Regional Bee Inspectors, as well as our lead partner APHA, this will:

- Improve the quality and professionalism of local apiaries.
- Identify vulnerable and un-secure units for action;

3.2.1 All sites on the MoJ estate designated or otherwise; that have identified protected species, must implement a full species survey to include a population status survey, which will be recorded on the MoJ protected and priority species database and recorded additionally through the NBN.

3.2.3 All contractors and FM providers, working or providing services for the MoJ Shared estate must demonstrate that they have a current policy for biosecurity and that they specifically fulfil law relating to honey bees.

3.2 PRINCIPLES, POLICY & DRIVERS

In addition to our policy for reducing loss of biodiversity, especially at our designated sites, we are fully aware of our partner's targets towards biosecurity, which we intend to actively manage through Memorandum's of Understanding and local and national Site Management Agreements. Our overall ambitions and principles will certainly dictate how we approach both the UK Government framework for biosecurity; and how we support our Executive Agencies, Shared estate and Affiliated partners.

Through:

- 3.4.1 Agreeing practical, responsible local biosecurity plans with our lead partner's the Animal and Plant Health Agency; together with Natural England, Natural Resources Wales and Scottish Natural Heritage;
- 3.4.2 with special regards to protecting our Environmental sensitive and designated sites;
- 3.4.3 And where consistent with this, engage with local and national community partnerships through social and community action planning and innovative projects that promote and uphold our biosecurity processes.

4 INNOVATION & IMPLEMENTATION

Understanding the importance of biosecurity on our business, and our environmental sensitive land holdings, especially how we provide support and advice to our partners, stakeholders, FM providers and the wider community, is crucial, as we continue to embed our biosecurity processes.

Through innovative projects and practical proven professional training with our lead partners, we aim to create a culture of building biosecurity in to the very fabric of our estate maintenance at our environmental sensitive and commercially driven agricultural and horticultural sites by:

- 4.1.1 Implementing over the next 5 years across a support network of volunteers and through a lead partnership, a programme of practical training modules, which will link through to a national training database;
- 4.1.2 Implementing a data sharing programme to our lead partners APHA, through a geographical land management programme supporting the MoJ estate planning and estate maintenance programmes; specifically supporting the protection of priority species and habitats.

5 KEY REFERENCE & ACCESS INFORMATION

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plant-biosecurity-strategy-for-great-britain>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/disease-prevention-for-livestock-farmers>

<http://www.nonnativespecies.org//index.cfm?pageid=299>

<http://www.nonnativespecies.org/factsheet/index.cfm>

<http://www.minstervets.co.uk/uploads/Files/Biosecurity.pdf>

Further information

For further information or advice on this policy, please contact the Sustainable Development Team at: SDenquiries@justice.gsi.gov.uk