

## Trees and Woodland Scientific Advisory Group (TAW-SAG)

# Meeting 16 Minutes: 19 September 2023

### Attendees

- **Rob MacKenzie** (RMK) - [Chair], School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences University of Birmingham; Birmingham Institute of Forest Research.
- **Ian Bateman** (IB) - Director of the Land, Environment, Economics and Policy Institute. University of Exeter.
- **Richard Buggs** (RB) - [Observer], Kew Gardens, Plant Health Group.
- **Paul Burgess** (PB) - Ecology and Management, Cranfield Soil and Agri-food Institute Cranfield University.
- **Keith Kirby** (KK) - Department of Biology, University of Oxford.
- **Maggie Roe** (MR) - Landscape Planning Research & Policy Engagement, University of Newcastle
- **Ruth Mitchell** (RM) - Biodiversity and Ecosystems Group, Ecological Sciences Department, James Hutton Institute.
- **Stephen Cavers** (SC) - Ecology Evolution and Environmental Change - Centre for Ecology and Hydrology.
- **Clive Potter** (CP) – Centre for Environmental Policy, Imperial College London.
- **Patricia Thornley** (PT) - School of Engineering and Applied Science, Aston University.
- **Daisy Ellis** (DE) - Head of Strategy, Engagement and Analysis, Defra.
- **Clare Williams** (CW) – Evidence and Analysis Team for Trees/Forestry, Defra.
- **Rebecca McIlhiney** (RMI)- Evidence and Analysis Team Leader for Trees/ Forestry, Defra.
- **Charlotte Williams** (ChW), Research & Development (R&D) Project Delivery Advisor, Defra.
- **Dan Doherty** (DD) - Head of Trees, Woodlands and Forestry Policy, Defra.
- **Cara Brander** (CB) - Energy Forestry & Innovation Policy Lead, Defra.
- **Iain Drummett** (ID) - Evidence and Analysis Team Leader for Trees/ Forestry, Defra.
- **Richard Ferris** (RF) - Science Lead, Trees & Woodlands, Terrestrial Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment (NCEA), Defra
- **Rhiannon Leyden-Preece** (RLP) - Evidence and Analysis Team for Trees/Forestry, Defra.
- **Chris McGurk** (CM) - Evidence and Analysis Team for Trees/Forestry, Defra.

### Apologies

- **Julie Urquhart** (JU) - Environmental Social Science, University of Gloucestershire.
- **Chris Quine** (CQ) - [Observer], Chief Scientist, Forest Research.
- **Mike Morecroft** (MM) - [Observer], Principal specialist on climate change, Natural England and Visiting Professor, University of Reading.

## Item 1: Welcome and updates

1. RMK welcomed everyone to the 16th meeting of the TAW-SAG. ID was introduced as a new Evidence and Analysis Team Leader for Trees/ Forestry, Defra.

## Item 2: Review and agree minutes from previous meeting

2. The minutes from the last meeting were agreed and the actions were reviewed:

From	Number	Action	Owner	Status
18/07/2023	1	All to review the international representatives' spreadsheet and send names of additional representatives to CW	CW	Complete
18/07/2023	2	CW to check with CQ the name from Napier.	CW	Complete
18/07/2023	3	TaW-SAG to send any additional detailed comments on the paper directly to Louise Hill.	LH	Complete
18/07/2023	4	TaW-SAG to provide a short advice paper on emerging forestry species.	RMI	To be discussed at this meeting

## Item 3: Programme Board update

3. DE and RMK provided an update from the Programme and July's Programme Board.
4. The key points are:
  - a. Defra has a new Directorate Group focusing on Delivery, Sarah Holmer is the Director General. Still to be decided on how the NCF Programme works with this.
  - b. July Programme Board – presentation by Emmeline Rogers (Defra) on an update of the Trees and Water Code of Practice and guidance.
  - c. There was a discussion about the Stakeholder Forum and the Big Nature Impact Fund (BNIF).

**Action 1: CW to add Trees and Water COP update to future TaW-SAG agenda items**

**Action 2: DE to discuss BNIF coming to TaW-SAG with Defra team**

## Item 4: Discussion of TaW-SAG emerging forest species paper

5. TaW-SAG discussed the paper and made suggestions for further changes and were happy to sign off the paper after a final grammar check.

**Action 3: RMK to send amended TaW-SAG paper to IB for final grammar check.**

## **Item 5: Overview of terrestrial Natural Capital & Ecosystem Assessment (tNCEA)**

6. RF presented an overview of tNCEA. RF can provide TaW-SAG the key contacts for different parts of the tNCEA programme.
7. Summary of key points raised in feedback discussion:
  - d. RF confirmed there is government commitment for the Programme to 2028 and beyond. However, the emphasis may shift in the future, to a greater reliance on remotely-sensed data rather than from field survey, due to capacity issues.
  - e. The countryside survey is not incorporated but NCEA are working on better integration of the many surveys being undertaken and CEH is a partner.
  - f. National Ecosystem Assessment (2011) was a driver for the NCEA work. tNCEA have done less on the Economics than marine NCEA programme but are recruiting to strengthen this part of the programme.
  - g. There is no plan to bring genetic diversity into the assessment at the moment but the evaluation on Forest Genetic Resources could be useful. Genetic diversity will be added to the customer needs list if not already there.
  - h. Offer from IB of some Economics GB work that could be used.
  - i. Some of the NCEA data is used by the Office for National Statistics and natural capital accounts.

**Action 4: RF to provide details of key contacts in the tNCEA programme**

**Action 5: RMI to discuss adding genetic diversity to the tNCEA customer needs list**

## **Item 6: AOB**

8. CW discussed the open recruitment for 2 new TaW-SAG members. A Candidate Pack will be added to the TaW-SAG website and requested that all members distribute to their networks.
9. KK discussed the Parliamentary Environmental Audit Committee report 'Seeing the wood for the trees: the contribution of the forestry and timber sectors to biodiversity and net zero goals.' PT confirmed that the Biomass Strategy has been published. Need to look at the needs across the sector and carbon.
10. The Agroforestry Show worked well with Science and Stakeholders.
11. RM will cover the next NCF Programme Board and chair the next TaW-SAG meeting if necessary.

**Action 6: PT to investigate a presentation on the Biomass Strategy in relation to the Forestry Sector.**

Trees and Forestry, Strategy Engagement and Analysis Team July 2023

Dates of the next two meetings are 19 September 2023 and 16 November 2023.