

**COORDINATED AGENDA FOR MARINE, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS
SCIENCE**

10th BOARD MEETING

Wednesday 27 April 2011 – Saughton House, Edinburgh

MINUTE OF MEETING

Present:

Sue Walker (Chair)

Anna Whyte (Food Standards Agency Scotland)

Colin Galbraith (Scottish Government)

Colin Moffat (Marine Scotland Science, Scottish Government)

Francis Brewis (Rural and Environment, Scottish Government) – *from item 05*

Gordon Machray (SASA, Scottish Government)

James Curran (Scottish Environment Protection Agency)

Kevin Rae (CAMERAS Secretariat)

Richard Allan (Scottish Water)

Roger Coppock (Forestry Commission Scotland)

Susan Davies (Director of Policy and Advice, SNH)

In Attendance:

Sarah Gledhill (Scientific Adviser, RESAS - sub for Phil Balls)

Martin Marsden (SEPA) – *until Item 04*

Apologies:

Charlotte Maltin (Quality Meat Scotland)

Ian Bainbridge (Scottish Natural Heritage)

Rebekah Widdowfield (Scottish Government)

1) Welcome and introductions

SW welcomed the group to the 10th meeting of the CAMERAS Board. Apologies were received from Charlotte Maltin, Ian Bainbridge and Rebekah Widdowfield.

SW thanked Susan Davies for attending on behalf of Scottish Natural Heritage, Sarah Gledhill for acting as a substitute for Phil Balls, and as the representative for the Scottish Government scientific advisers, and Martin Marsden from SEPA, who would be presenting the draft environmental monitoring focus paper to the Board.

2) Minutes of last meeting and actions arising

The minutes of the 9th Board meeting were agreed. KR referred the Board to the actions update paper.

Actions Arising

Food waste workshop proposal (AP03) – AW spoke to the ‘Resource Management in the Food Sector Workshop Paper’ in Charlotte Maltin’s absence. The Board were informed that the proposed workshop would have the same format as the earlier Omics workshop, with a working date of some time in September.

The Board supported the reworked proposal and asked for the workshop to go ahead on that basis with a date in September identified as soon as possible.

Mechanism to allow interested parties to feed into single CAMERAS Rep meetings (AP06) – KR informed the Board that he had looked into various ways that papers could be shared in advance of meetings that would allow interested parties to feed in views in advance; his suggestion was to use the CAMERAS sharepoint site to store meeting papers. It was explained that this technology would prevent inboxes being clogged up and interested parties could set up alerts which would result in them receiving an email when new papers were added to the site. In addition, it was suggested that the CAMERAS champions could lead on this for each of their organisations by uploading papers and providing support and guidance to staff.

The Board were happy with this approach and it was agreed that this would be trialled with the May LWEC partners Board meeting.

Environmental monitoring innovation group (AP07) - JC told the Board that the first meeting of this group had been arranged for 13 May and talked through that draft agenda. He agreed to report back on the agreed terms of reference and first area of activity at the June Board meeting.

AP01 - Report back on the environmental monitoring innovation group terms of reference and first area of activity at the June Board meeting (JC)

RC asked whether there were any linkages with the UKEOF project. JC confirmed that they were looking at read-across to identify the right areas in which to innovate.

SD felt that an important first step would be to knowledge map and identify existing technologies.

Defra horizon scanning contract (AP08) - KR confirmed that the SG had funded the first year of this contract on behalf of the partnership. CG explained that he had discussed this with Phil Ball, head of science and knowledge management in the

Scottish Government and felt that there was a need to look at how this might help inform horizon scanning activities across the partnership. It was agreed that CG would discuss this with Peter Singleton (SEPA) and look into organising a meeting with the wider partnership.

AP02 - Discuss Defra horizon scanning contract with Peter Singleton and look into organising a cameras meeting to discuss (CG)

Food Policy Seminar ((08) – AP11) - CG provided an update and explained that although he had been in contact with the head of food policy but policy team, commitments around the Scottish parliamentary elections meant that action would have to be slipped back to the June meeting.

Careers in Science – Competency Framework for Scientists ((08)-AP13) – GM explained that the competency framework for scientists is still to be officially signed off and therefore this action would be on hold until this has taken place.

Future Skills Requirements

GM presented a paper to the Board on future skills requirements and explained that the question was whether a co-ordinated approach was needed across the partnership.

JC felt that a co-ordinated approach would have more impact but could result in a lack of focus. He suggested that it could be more powerful if a single area of focus was identified and suggested that the Hydro-nation (all aspects of water science) could be good as it would attract political buy in.

SD agreed on the principal of identifying specific areas and suggested that more effective internships would help to get students into desired areas.

RA supported JC's suggestion of focusing on hydro-nation/water science.

SD felt that a distinction needed to be made between very specialist areas where a subset of CAMERAS partners could tackle skills issues together and broader areas that would benefit from a CAMERAS-wide approach.

It was agreed that GM would remain in the lead on this piece of work and he was asked to investigate viability of hydro-nation/water science or other specific areas as a CAMERAS-wide focus.

AP03 - investigate viability of hydro-nation/water science or other specific areas as a CAMERAS-wide focus for skills requirement activity (GM)

3) Environmental monitoring - focus paper sign off

Martin Marsden, SEPA, presented the draft Environmental Monitoring Focus paper to the Board and talked it through; providing an update on feedback received up to this point. He explained that the area that seemed to have split the group was that issue of rankings of pressures - the main issue was around organisations not having confidence in the agreed rankings. The Board were asked for their view on how they felt that this issue should be dealt with.

MM suggest that one compromise would be to remove references to rankings in the main paper and keep them in the annexes.

JC view was that the rankings should remain in the main document, as presented. His view was that a pragmatic approach was needed for this piece of work, as its very nature meant that there was no perfect answer.

RC agreed with the principal but felt that there had been an issue around the timescales given to allow organisations to provide comments. In his view more time would have allowed a more measured response and explained that this was not an issue of fundamental principal but discussions around rankings to meet the expectations of FCS.

CM explained that MSS was supportive of a Scottish monitoring approach but felt that part of the issue around rankings stem from a similar approach that was taken at an EU level and resulted in severe difficulty during peer review. CM also had some concerns over terminology within the document.

CG felt that MM and his team had done a good job to get the paper to this point, as there was a massive amount of data that had to be distilled into a very concise paper. He also noted that this paper represented the interface between science and policy meaning that a pragmatic approach was needed. CM suggested that a small group was convened to address the issues raise and take this forward to publication and implementation.

SD suggested that ranking became important when looking at specific topics and stressed the need for transparency to explain the process used to reach those rankings. SD proposed leaving the rankings in the paper and clearly setting the context of those rankings.

JC agreed that it was important to explicitly lay out how the rankings were arrived at.

CG was asked to convene a meeting with MM, CM and Julie Garrow (FCS) to bottom out these issues.

AP04 - Arrange meeting to bottom out issues around Environmental Monitoring Focus paper (CG)

MM felt that he could rework the paper based on the feedback and address the concerns raised. SW asked him to deliver the revised paper for the June Board meeting.

AP05 - Rework environmental monitoring focus paper based on outcomes of meeting and feedback and deliver to June Board meeting (MM)

CG raised a point about the implementation timescales set out in the paper – his view being that these needed to be taken forward by at least 6 months. MM welcomed the push to deliver more quickly and felt that this would not present any great difficulty.

SW thanked all those involved in getting the paper to this stage.

At this point Martin Marsden left the meeting

4) Soils activity - update

RC provided an update to the Board on soils activity and talked to the papers provided. The Board were told that there was now an agreement in place with the James Hutton Institute (JHI) for Scottish Government partners to get free access to soils data.

RC explained that the FC and JHI had begun to look at a joint soils data project looking at soil carbon and forest impacts and felt that there was scope to broaden this out to become a CAMERAS project – the suggestion being that it could be merged into the soils steering group which was lead by the SG. RC was asked to investigate this with the SG lead on soils science, Geeta Puri.

AP06 - Discuss Soils Steering Group and ways to share information across interested parties with Geeta Puri (RC)

5) Research commissioning alignment - update

RC provided the Board with a brief update on progress explaining that there had been little movement due to other pressures. Nevertheless, RC suggested that a move could be made to identify areas of common interest that could be taken forward on a joint basis and a small group could be convened to investigate this. This was agreed as an acceptable way forward and RC was asked to form the group to scope that and provide a paper to the Board in June.

AP07 - Form group to scope research areas of common interests and produce a paper for the June Board meeting (RC)

At this point Francis Brewis joined the meeting.

6) CAMERAS conference report

CG talked to the SNIFFER produce report from the March 2011 CAMERAS conference.

SW sought the views of the board members on the suggested actions.

SD suggested any communication good practice work should have regard to the work undertaken by the SEARS communication group. There was strong support from the Board to improve the way the CAMERAS partners communicate their science to policy makers, Ministers and the public.

There was agreement that a knowledge gap existed around the understanding of policy development in the scientific community and SG suggested that Scottish Government scientific advisers could be made more use of in that space as they already act as an interface between policy and science.

SD suggested that the SNH Scientific Advisory Committee could invite policy to present at their meetings.

GM agreed with SG that the scientific advisers had a key role to play as the main interface with the Main Research Providers.

The consensus was that the Board accepted the recommendations and CG was asked to ensure that relevant actions were slipstreamed into the forward work programme.

AP08 - Ensure that the recommended actions from the SNIFFER conference report are slipstreamed into the CAMERAS work programme (CG)

The next conference was discussed. SW felt that there were organisational issues around previous conference, which in the view of the Board could have been handled more effectively.

CG explained that an option available to the partnership was for the partner organisations to take on the organisation and delivery of the next conference. There would obviously be resource implications but these would not be great, as they would be spread across the organisations. There could also be benefits with regard to further embedding the CAMERAS initiative within each organisation.

CG also felt that the upcoming election provided the partnership with the opportunity to fix a conference theme that mapped onto the priorities of the new administration.

The Board supported these suggestions and SW asked members to suggest possible themes for the next conference. KR was asked to identify a suitable date for the next conference in March 2012.

AP09 - Board members to suggest possible themes for the next CAMERAS conference. Suggestions to CG/KR as soon as possible (end of May).

AP10 - Identify suitable date in March 2012 for CAMERAS conference (KR)

7) Forward work programme 2011-2012

CG spoke to his paper and sought the views of the Board members.

RC suggested the need for a named lead for each action to allow resource to be effectively assessed for deliverability.

Governance

The governance arrangements as set out in the paper were discussed.

SD felt that there could be some benefit in including CAMERAS partners in some meetings with SG Directors. SW explained that some thought had already been given to the possibility of arranging some form of regular meeting between SG Directors and Chief Executives of the CAMERAS partners. The thinking was still underway as to what this would look like.

SG provided information on the Scottish Government strategic research portfolio governance group, which was a soon to meet as a decision making forum, initially to be chaired by Valerie Macniven but with the intention to move the chair over to the Chief Scientific Adviser for Rural Affairs and the Environment once they were in post. The Chair of the CAMERAS Board will sit on this group.

Work packages

CG then talked through the various work packages and asked for comments.

WP1 – Developing cost effectiveness

CG explained in his view this was a very important area to focus on and believed that the work involved in pulling together the 2010-11 annual report would help to identify examples of the type of collaborative work that increased cost effectiveness across the partnership.

RC agreed that saving money was important but also felt that there was a need to identify value added by collaborative working and organisational synergy.

WP2 – Scoping and horizon scanning

CG believed that the Defra horizon scanning contract, discussed earlier, would provide an important contribution to this work package but suggested that work was required to identify how this would interface with other futures and scoping activity.

WP3 – Data and information

CG suggested that a CAMERAS approach to data would provide real value to the partner organisations.

SD saw this aspect as one of the key benefits of CAMERAS working and believed that there were current examples that could be drawn upon. Nevertheless, she felt that there was still some confusion around the relationships between the National Biodiversity Network (NBN), Scottish environment data portal and environmental data providers' forum.

As a general comment on the paper as a whole, JC felt that the content of the paper was correct but suggested that the work packages could be brigaded at a higher level, with suggested titles of: improving evidence; horizon scanning; contributing to policy; communications; and cost effectiveness – as work package which would cut across all other packages. In his opinion this would make the aspirations of the partnership clearer to stakeholders.

WP4 – Monitoring

This work package was considered during the earlier environmental monitoring agenda item.

WP5 – Focus Papers on Science

The Board agreed that there was a need to ensure that the focus papers were implemented and become embedded within the work of CAMERAS partners. CG was asked to ensure that action is put in place to ensure the effective completion and implementation of the Focus documents with opportunities taken at future Board meetings to review progress.

CM explained that the Scottish Marine Science Strategy is now published but questioned whether there was any evidence that it was being used to inform the future work of organisations involved in marine activity. He intended that a mechanism would be put in place to assess its take up.

GM suggested that these documents needed to be proactively shared with the MRPs to allow them to align their mid-term review thinking. The Board agreed that there would be value in this.

WP6 – Briefing and advice

JC believed that post-election briefing as a worthwhile area for the partnership to focus on and suggested identifying one significant area for the partnership to provide briefing on.

SW suggested that in addition to this CAMERAS could be well placed to feed into resilience briefings in some way – the suggestion being that Ministers would find real value in co-ordinated scientific advice and briefing in dealing with some particularly difficult or complex issues.

JC felt that this was good in principal but explained that in his experience at the time of crisis it was not practical to take such a considered approach due to time pressures.

WP7 – Communications

The Board supported the suggestion of establishing a communications group and using the ‘champions’ and SNIFFER drive forward communication work.

The way forward

CG explained that he would take the comments on board and develop the paper into a final draft work programme to be presented at the June Board meeting.

The Board members were asked to feed in any addition comments to CG by mid-May.

AP11 - Feed any comments on work programme paper to Colin Galbraith by Mid-May (Board members)

AP12 - Redraft work programme based on feedback and present at the June Board meeting (CG)

8) Communication training for scientists

CG provided information to the Board on communication training for scientists that could be provided by the Dundee Science Centre (DSC). The Board agreed that this type of training would provide some benefit and asked CG to follow this up with the DSC and report back.

AP13 - Further investigate communication training for scientists offered by DSC and report back to the June Board (CG)

9) AOB

Richard Allan moving to a new job

RA informed the Board that he would shortly be taking up the post of Managing Director in Scottish Water Horizons. This would mean that he would have to resign his position on the Board but explained that the intention was for his replacement to take on this role. SW thanked him for his input over the past 18 months, specifically in delivering the Freshwater Focus paper.

Cameras Letter of Support – Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctoral Programme (EMJD)

CG discussed a request he had received to provide a CAMERAS letter of support for a bid to the EMJD programme. The Board were content to support this bid and SW felt that if it was successful it could allow CAMERAS to specify the areas of research based on the needs of the partner organisations. CG was asked to draft the letter of support and partners were asked to feed in any specific views to him.

AP14 - Produce CAMERAS letter of support for EMJD programme bid and include views of partners (CG)

Date of August Board Meeting

KR informed the Board that the Director of RPID, Valerie Macniven intended to attend all future Board meetings; however, other commitments meant that she was unable to attend the August meeting and had asked for the date to be rearranged.

KR agreed to liaise with Valerie's office and try to identify a suitable date in early September and consult Board members on this for suitability.

AP15 - Identify new date for August Board meeting (KR)

Scottish Government/RERAD restructuring

KR informed the Board that the decision had been made to merge the former RERAD divisions, Research and Science and Rural and Environment Analytical Services into a single division which would be headed up by Rebekah Widdowfield. The new division was to be called Rural and Environment Science and Analytical Services (RESAS) and was part of RPID directorate. The merger would formally take place on 4th May 2011. Organisational charts would be circulated to Board members once they had been finalised.

CAMERAS Annual Report

SW asked CG to draft an annual report for the partnership covering 2010-11.

AP16 - Produce draft 2010-11 CAMERAS annual report and present to Board for comment (CG)

UK Government quality of science review

SD informed the Board that the Defra Chief Scientific Adviser (Professor Bob Watson) had issued guidelines on how evidence should be gathered and the audit trails required for converting this to advice and/or policy. The guidelines could have implications for the quality assurance processes used by Scottish agencies. Additionally an independent review of Natural England's marine evidence to inform protected areas work is underway. A watching brief is being kept on the outcome of that to ensure that standards and procedures across the country conservation agencies are aligned. In due course it may be appropriate for CAMERAS to look at opportunities to align the quality assurance of its science.

SW asked SD whether SNH would be comfortable representing CAMERAS at UK level meetings and feedback any relevant information. SD did not feel this would present any problems and explained that SNH had used CAMERAS as an example of how to drive consistency of science across organisations.

GM informed the Board that, in addition to this work, Defra were conducting a review of all of their research agencies and this had the potential to create cross-border

issues. SW suggested that the need for SG engagement with the UK Government on these matters should be highlighted to Valerie Macniven and asked CG and KR to take this forward with her.

AP17 - Raise the matter of engagement on UK matters by CAMERAS Board with Valerie Macniven (CG/KR)

Scottish Marine Atlas

CM told the Board of the recent publication of the Scottish Marine Atlas, a piece of work in which a number of CAMERAS partners were involved. KR was asked to arrange to place a link to this on the CAMERAS website.

AP18 - Post link to the Scottish Marine Atlas publication on CAMERAS website (KR)

10)Date of future meetings

The next meeting take place on Wed 29 June 2011 in Saughton House, Edinburgh.

Agreed Actions

	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
AP01	Report back on the environmental monitoring innovation group terms of reference and first area of activity.	James Curran	29 June 2011 Board meeting
AP02	Discuss Defra horizon scanning contract with Peter Singleton and look into organising a cameras meeting to discuss further.	Colin Galbraith	29 June 2011 Board meeting
AP03	Investigate viability of hydro-nation/water science/other specific area as a CAMERAS focus for skills requirement activity.	Gordon Machray	29 June 2011 Board meeting
AP04	Arrange meeting to bottom out issues around environmental monitoring focus paper.	Colin Galbraith	29 June 2011 Board meeting
AP05	Rework environmental monitoring focus paper based on the outcomes of the meeting/feedback and deliver to June Board meeting.	Martin Marsden	29 June 2011 Board meeting
AP06	Discuss soils steering group and ways to share information across interested parties with Geeta Puri.	Roger Coppock	29 June 2011 Board meeting
AP07	Form group to scope research areas of common interests and produce a paper for the June Board meeting.	Roger Coppock	29 June 2011 Board meeting
AP08	Ensure that the recommended actions from the SNIFFER conference report are slipstreamed into the CAMERAS work programme.	Colin Galbraith	29 June 2011 Board meeting
AP09	Board members to suggest possible themes for the next CAMERAS conference.	Board members	31 May 2011
AP10	Identify suitable date in March 2012 for CAMERAS conference.	Kevin Rae	29 June 2011 Board meeting
AP11	Feed any comments on work programme paper to Colin Galbraith by Mid-May.	Board members	Mid-May 2011
AP12	Produce detailed CAMERAS work programme and present at the June Board meeting.	Colin Galbraith	29 June 2011 Board meeting
AP13	Further investigate communication training for scientists offered by DSC and report back to the June Board.	Colin Galbraith	29 June 2011 Board meeting
AP14	Produce CAMERAS letter of support for EMJD programme bid and include views of partners.	Colin Galbraith	Cleared
AP15	Identify new date for August Board meeting.	Kevin Rae	29 June 2011 Board meeting
AP16	Produce outline draft 2010-11 CAMERAS annual report and present to Board for comment.	Colin Galbraith	29 June 2011 Board meeting
AP17	Raise the matter of engagement on UK matters by CAMERAS Board with Valerie Macniven.	Colin Galbraith/Kevin Rae	As soon as possible
AP18	Post link to the Scottish Marine Atlas publication on CAMERAS website.	Kevin Rae	End of May 2011.

Ongoing Actions from Previous Meetings

	Action	Responsibility	Timescale
(08)- AP05	Set up CAMERAS group to take forward biodiversity data customer needs analysis and report back to the Board in June 2011	Colin Galbraith	29 June 2011 Board meeting
(08)- AP06	SNH to lead on scoping need for establishing a biodiversity recording data forum and report back to Board in June 2011	Ian Bainbridge	29 June 2011 Board meeting
(08)- AP13	Work Plan – Careers in Science - Arrange a workshop in spring to investigate the use of a standardised scientist competency framework across the partnership.	Gordon Machray	On hold until SG competency framework for scientists is officially signed off.
(08)- AP11	Work Plan - Food Seminar – Speak to David Thompson to discuss.	Colin Galbraith	29 June 2011 Board meeting
(08)- AP14	Work Plan – Science Engagement - Organise a workshop to take forward the science engagement work	Iain Bainbridge	29 June 2011 Board meeting
(09)- AP04	Present behavioural science proposal paper to the Board	Rebekah Widdowfield	29 June 2011 Board meeting