

A COORDINATED AGENDA FOR MARINE, ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL AFFAIRS SCIENCE (CAMERAS) (2011-2016)

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Headline Themes

1. Do you agree that the two broad categories of 'Local Responses to Global Change' and 'Optimising the Potential of Scotland's Natural Assets' are helpful in providing an overlying structure to the Co-ordinated Agenda? *Yes, the two broad categories will provide an overlying structure for identifying science themes and coordinating the delivery of science in support of policy. AFBI suggests however that the second theme might better read "Conserving Scotland's natural assets and optimising their potential".*
2. Are the descriptions of these set out in Section 3 (and [Annex 3](#)) comprehensive? *Theme descriptions are adequate and explain in particular what is to be achieved.*
3. Do these cover the major policy challenges where science can contribute as you see them? *Yes, the descriptions of the themes usefully cover the major areas where science is expected to contribute to policy.*
4. Are they likely to remain broadly relevant over the longer time horizon (well beyond the 2016 focus of this Coordinated Agenda)? *The themes identified are likely to remain relevant over a very long time horizon as they are key themes concerning impacts of, and responses to, global changes and the ongoing need to manage natural resources, while achieving economic objectives*
5. Do you agree with the description of support for the National Capability Theme set out in Section 3 (and [Annex 3](#))? *AFBI strongly supports this concept of the strategic importance of the national science capability. National capability spreads across agencies, NDPS, HEIs and Research Council Institutes and a clear funding model would be beneficial to all involved. If CAMERAS delivers such a model then that alone will be a major success.*
6. What facilities, resources and data do you think are important for Scotland to maintain? *AFBI has no comment on Scottish science faculties or resources, but wishes to comment on data. The value of long time series of data (e.g. fisheries, environmental, land use) will be critical in addressing many of the big policy questions that will continue to come up. The two overarching themes in CAMERAS allude to that, as they deal with issues such as climate change, resource status and exploitation and stewardship of the environment. These cannot be addressed with short datasets!*

7. Are there other resources that Scotland needs to acquire to support future policy development? *Related to point 6 above, AFBI suggests that Scotland carries out an inventory of long term natural science datasets, in order to establish a national strategic database, to underpin the science needed to address the two overarching themes. This may have to be resourced as a specific national capability project.*

Policy Issues

8. Have we correctly identified the key policy issues and the associated scientific opportunities in Section 3? *Most of the key top level policy issues have been captured (but see 9 below)*
9. Are there additional issues that should be included? *There is no specific mention of policy and science relating to management of the coastal zone. Although the Marine Bill is mentioned in section 12, coastal zone management should be included as a significant policy issue. The coastal zone represents a significant component of Scotland's natural resource, coastal ecosystems are particularly fragile and resource use conflicts are highly likely to occur. The concept of integrated coastal zone management is an example of where science and policy must integrate across diverse areas.*
10. What do you think will be the most important influences on Scotland's future in the Marine, Environment, Rural Affairs and related areas? *As above. Sustainable use of the coastal zone (and marine spatial planning in general) will become an increasingly pressing policy issue, especially as the pressure for renewable energy leads to proposed siting of generation capability in coastal and near shore marine environments. Also, climate change will be an overarching influence on terrestrial and marine ecosystems and on goods and services derived from them.*
11. Why do you think these are important? *Covered in 10 above.*
12. Are there other scientific opportunities which should be highlighted? *See response to q6 above. Many scientific opportunities arise from long term monitoring and research studies and these will play an increasing part in addressing the scientific challenges of the future.*

The Science

13. What existing areas of Scottish based scientific expertise should be maintained to contribute evidence to key policy issues? *Maintain science that delivers answers to policy questions, plus a degree of strategic science capability. Also, long term environmental monitoring. Taken together, these form the core national capability in science.*
14. How clear is the relationship between the scientific areas and the key policy issues? *The document points to the benefits of "centres of excellence" and "integration across the wider evidence base" If these are successfully implemented, they are likely to enhance the relationship between the science areas and the policy issues.*

15. In which areas of science can we continue to make use of expertise supported elsewhere e.g. at the UK, EU and international levels? *Most areas. The document acknowledges the need for Scottish science to integrate with and benefit from wider national and international science programmes.*
16. In the time frame for CAMERAS (2011-2016) what new emerging areas of science are likely to mature and become available for more general use or application? *Science on renewable energy is likely to become more mature as technology develops.*
17. Do we have the expertise available to be able to use these new opportunities? *Not known.*
18. In which areas does Scotland need to be self reliant? *Not known.*

Delivery

19. Knowledge Exchange is essential for scientific activity to achieve impact. Do you agree that KE should be an explicit and integral aspect of the delivery of this Coordinated Agenda. *AFBI agrees with this view.*
20. How can we continue to improve the integration of evidence from a diverse range of sources into forms that are accessible to end users? *Scientists need to be encouraged to do this as they tend by nature to be focused on one area. Having clear national coordinating structures for science, clear funding routes and national centres of excellence that can integrate science to address multi-disciplinary science problems are important here. It is positive that CAMERAS is working along these lines.*
21. How can we reconcile the requirement for science to be responsive and flexible to short term demands while at the same time ensuring that longer term strategic research continues to progress our knowledge and understanding? *This is a challenge for any national science infrastructure, as well as at individual institute level. The response to q14 refers.*
22. How can we ensure that the 2 way flow of knowledge from science to policy and from policy to the academic community is optimised? *Not 2 way. AFBI believes there is in effect a three cornered relationship, with policy sitting at one corner, agencies/NDPBs sitting at another corner and HEIs/Research Council Institutes (RIs) at the third. Information flow tends to be most active between the policy and Agency/NDPB corners, less so between the agency/NSPB and HEI/RI corners and even less so between the HEI/RIs and policy corners. This is almost inevitable, given the differing types of research carried out by agencies/NDPBs and HEI/RIs.*
23. Are there alternative structures/systems or new approaches/organisations that could enhance these flows? *The model recently adopted by FRS/CEFAS/AFBI/NERC on the Sustainable Marine Bioresources programme provides a successful model for achieving better three way communication. This particular programme brings together policy customers, government funded fishery laboratories NERC institutes and HEIs in 6 combined projects addressing specific common agreed policy related themes.*

24. Are there science delivery models which could provide examples of good practice for Scotland to follow? *CAMERAS has identified key delivery issues in Section 3. If these are addressed then delivery should be enhanced.*

General Comments

25. We would also welcome any other general comments you may have on any of the issues raised in this document. *There is little mention of the policy drivers at European level. These have enormous impact at member state level and should be explicitly considered by CAMERAS. There is an obvious need to integrate national/local policy with the wider policy landscape and the science programmes in place must be capable of responding to this wider policy need.*