

UKEOF DNA Working Group – Terms of Reference

September 2019

Purpose

The DNA Working Group provides a forum for government agencies, academics and other stakeholders to discuss priorities for the use of DNA in environmental monitoring and to ensure effective communication with the wider community of interested groups and organisations. The Working Group helps facilitate methods development, share learning and good practice, explore technical challenges, develop collaborative opportunities and leverage research funding.

Terms of Reference

The DNA Working Group will:

1. Provide a link between researchers, developers of DNA based monitoring methods, and end users to ensure that activities are focussed on meeting priority information needs and that knowledge is transferred effectively within the wider community
2. Support and encourage best practice and the development of standards to inform the evaluation and use of DNA based methods.
3. Engage and work collaboratively with others nationally and internationally, seeking opportunities to influence research, share best practice, facilitate re-use of samples and data, and increase capacity.
4. Promote the use of DNA based methods and increase the awareness of the opportunities DNA based methods may provide to improve organisational efficiency and effectiveness.
5. Ensure good communication with the wider UKDNA network¹ and the End Users Group²
6. Support and co-ordinate DNA Technical Groups³ that focus on specific applications of DNA in environmental monitoring

¹ UKDNA network – community of individuals, groups and organisations engaged with the activities of the DNA Working group through receiving communications, contributing to Technical Groups and attending workshops and conferences.

² The End User Group is a subset of the Working Group for representatives of the UK environmental and conservation agencies.

³ Technical Groups focus on specific areas of interest to strengthen collaborative working, method development and knowledge exchange.

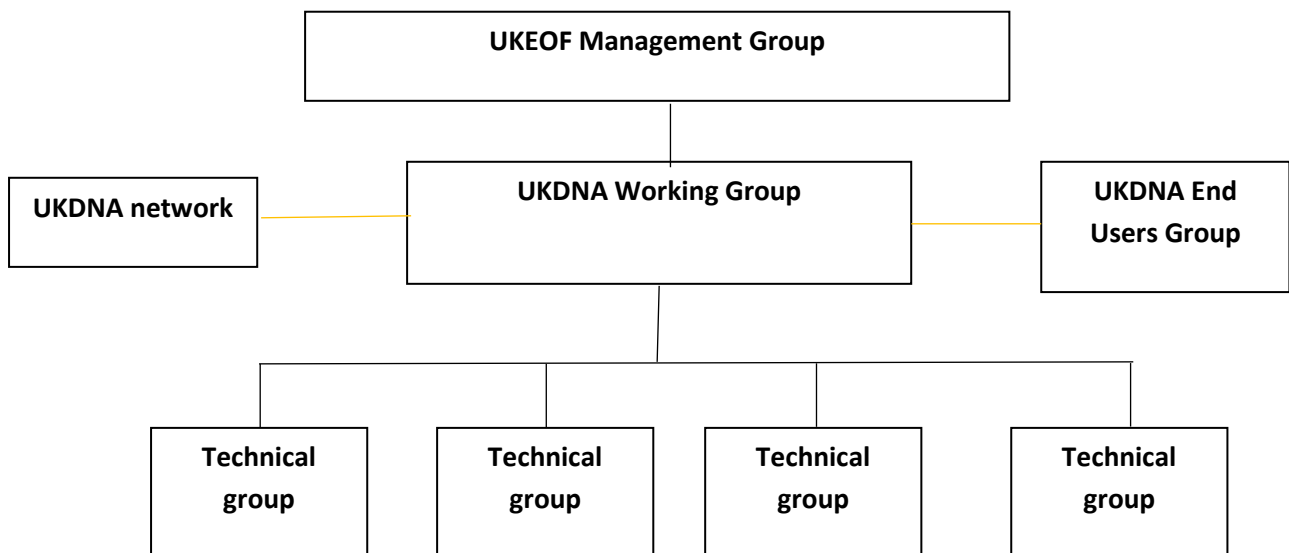
Responsibilities

By joining the DNA Working Group members agree to

- Use the Terms of Reference to guide the activities of the Working Group;
- Input into the development and implementation of a deliverable Work Plan;
- Work towards completion of the agreed activities within the allocated timescales, including taking on the role of Working group Lead as needed;
- Promote awareness of the activities of the Working Group within their organisation, and externally when appropriate.
- Attend and participate in face-to-face and teleconference meetings of the Working group, or nominate and brief a representative;
- Use the Working Group as a forum to share information about planned and potential projects, and facilitate this exchange by circulating information in advance of each meeting.

Governance and ways of working

The UKEOF DNA Working Group will meet face to face twice a year and communicate regularly by teleconference and email. It will report to each meeting of the UKEOF Management Group. The governance and relationship with the wider UKDNA network and End Users Group is shown below.



— Governance
— Communication

Membership

Bangor University	Nature Metrics
Bowburn Consultancy	Natural England
Centre for Ecology and Hydrology	Natural History Museum
Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Northern Ireland	Natural Resources Wales
Environment Agency	Salford University
Hull University	Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
Joint Nature Conservation Committee	Scottish Natural Heritage
Marine Scotland Science	University of East Anglia

Technical Groups

There are currently technical groups for the following areas of interest:

1. Pond biodiversity
2. Fish in lakes
3. Phytobenthos
4. Invasive non-native species
5. Marine
6. Terrestrial methods
7. Invertebrates in rivers