

# UK- Environmental Observation Framework

7<sup>th</sup> Management Group Teleconference

24<sup>th</sup> April 2012, 14.00-16.00

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## Note of Meeting

### Main Meeting Aims:

- Gather feedback from Members to inform the Sir John Beddington sustainable financing mechanisms debate.
- Agree the role of the DAG as the theme group (on behalf of UKLP) for INSPIRE EMF.

### Attendees:

Doug Wilson	EA & UK-EOF Chair
Amanda Charles	Go Science
Bruce Truscott	Met Office
Cathy Johnson	DECC
Helen Beadman	NERC (UK-EOF)
Lawrence Way	JNCC
Mary Barkham	LWEC
Michael Schultz	NERC
Peter Costigan	Defra
Richard Walmsley	EA
Stefan Carlyle	EA
Tim Pagella	WERH
Amber Vater	UK-EOF (notes)
Andrea Turner	UK-EOF

### Apologies

Andrew Watkinson	LWEC
Andy Nisbet	NE
Beth Greenaway	UK Space Agency
Caryn Le Roux	WG
David Allen	CCW
Gwyn Rees	NERC CEH
Ian Davidson	EEA / GMES / SEIS
Joanna Drewitt	SG
Keith Porter	NE
Liz Tucker	Defra
Nathan Critchlow-Watton	SEPA
Peter Stephenson	ERSC
Richard Howe	FC
Shaun Russell	WERH

## 1. Welcome & introductions

- 1.1. Members were welcomed by the Chair and Helen Beadman was introduced as the new UK-EOF Programme Manager starting on the 8<sup>th</sup> May 2012.

## 2. Sustainable financing mechanisms

- 2.1. The Chair provided an overview of Paper A and thanked members for their contributions. Amanda Charles will be using the list of critical observations with feedback from the meeting to inform the paper for discussion at the Sir John Beddington debate on the 19<sup>th</sup> May.

- 2.2. Members discussed the definition of 'long-term' in relation to funding. Due to many of these datasets being funded through public money, long-term may not necessarily mean 'long-term' due to changes within central government. The need to establish options and create mechanisms to overcome this issue would be stressed at the debate.
- 2.3. Regulatory observations were identified as potentially less vulnerable to funding cuts. It is less likely that these observations would be at risk because of the cost of infraction.
- 2.4. The wording for the Sir John Beddington debate paper should reflect that the observations are 'collected' by public sector organisations and not necessarily funded by public money. Some observations are funded through charge and others through third sector organisations.

**ACTION 1: Amanda to ensure the wording in the papers refers to observations 'collected' by and not 'funded by' public organisations**

- 2.5. The number of datasets in the list was considerable. Having reduced the list from over 1100 records in the catalogue to approximately 100 was a significant achievement. The relatively large number does mean that there are few generalisations that can be made.
- 2.6. Members discussed how most programmes were at some level of risk and that observations not on the list should be acknowledged as important in providing evidence for the UK. Many programmes are already running on reduced or at critical funding levels but could still continue to run with shrinkage in budgets. The continual risk of reduced funding should be reflected in the paper and options should be provided to ensure a continual review process is put in place. The UK-EOF and its Decision Support Framework could be useful tools for this process.
- 2.7. Several datasets submitted were lacking detailed explanations of why they are critical to the UK. Amber Vater was tasked with reviewing the list and collating further information from those submitting the datasets.

**ACTION 2: Amber Vater to collate further information, from the suppliers of each dataset, to support why the datasets are critical to the UK**

- 2.8. It was agreed that some examples should be picked out to include those that are currently at significant risk due to lack of long term funding mechanisms. Argo was agreed to be the obvious example. Members were asked to provide others to Amanda Charles.

**ACTION 3: Members to send suggestions of datasets which are currently 'at risk' to Amanda Charles, 27<sup>th</sup> April 2012**

- 2.9. The need to recognise UK reliance on international data sets (which UK uses but does not fund) in the paper was agreed. Met Office uses large quantities of data collected by other countries and currently does not make any financial contribution to these programmes. These data sets are amongst the most critical required by the Met Office to meet their objectives. Other organisations highlighted similar dependencies.
- 2.10. Suggestions were made to amend the caveats, including adding an additional line to recognise that post-process datasets are also critical to the UK but have not been identified here.

- 2.11. Amanda Charles agreed to circulate the papers for the debate before the 19<sup>th</sup> May and that Helen Beadman should attend the event on behalf of the UK-EOF.

**ACTION 4: Amanda Charles to send papers to Members before 14<sup>th</sup> May**

- 2.12. Members requested a copy of the Excel spreadsheet containing the list of critical observations and agreed it should not be distributed wider than the Management Group until after the debate on the 19<sup>th</sup> May. The format it should be distributed in will depend on the outcomes.

**ACTION 5: Amber Vater to send the Excel spreadsheet of critical observations to Members, 1<sup>st</sup> May**

- 2.13. Tim Pagella enquired if internal UK dependencies had been investigated. Amber Vater explained that UK-EOF had previously run an exercise to allow Management Group organisations the opportunity to flag observations which they didn't necessarily fund but used the data or outputs of.

**ACTION 6: Amber Vater to send details of the Assessment against Need to Tim Pagella, 30<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

**3. UK-EOF and its role within the UK implementation of INSPIRE EMF**

- 3.1. Stefan Carlyle introduced himself as the new Data Advisory Group (DAG) Chair and provided a background about the upcoming work that the DAG will be involved in on behalf of the UK Location Programme (UKLP). The next DAG meeting will involve consulting the data community to provide the evidence that the UK-EOF Management Group will need to make a decision about what role the UK-EOF could have in implementing INSPIRE Annex III in the UK. The DAG will provide a set of options for the Management Group to explore how UK-EOF can provide the most effective support for organisations needing to comply. Some options will have potential consequences for the UK-EOF catalogue. Evidence of the need for each of the proposed options will be provided to help Members agree the role UK-EOF should adopt. A paper including the resources and costs of each of the options, implications for the catalogue and the requirements of the UK-EOF will be presented at the June MGM. The risks to the catalogue in a wider context will be explored.
- 3.2. Members agreed the catalogue searchability is already useful and this should not be lost. Functionality will be a priority in any plans to update the catalogue. Automatic updates and reduced human input should be considered as a priority to reduce the risk associated with long term sustainability of databases. Centralised systems established for data providers would be at risk if long term funding mechanisms are not in place.
- 3.3. Mary Barkham announced that a Climate and Environmental Monitoring from Space (CEMS) project had been funded (£3million) by BIS. NERC and Met Office were already involved. It was agreed to invite a CEMS representative to the next DAG meeting as there may be potential link ups to through INSPIRE. It was also suggested that the secretariat should invite academic representatives to the next DAG meeting.

**ACTION 7: Mary Barkham and Amber Vater to contact CEMS project and invite them to the DAG meeting in June, 30<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

**ACTION 8: Amber Vater to ensure the academic community are represented at the DAG meeting, 30<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

#### **4. UK-EOF thematic studies**

- 4.1. Andrea Turner informed Members that the 'Citizen Science and Environmental Observations' project had begun. Project manager Helen Roy (Biological Records Centre, CEH) had been informed of additional UK-EOF members interested in the project and it was agreed to distribute the project details to the Management Group to ensure all interested organisations had the opportunity to provide input. A draft report will be made available for review at the 16<sup>th</sup> MGM in June.

#### **ACTION 9: Andrea Turner to distribute details of the Citizen Science project to ensure Members have the opportunity to provide input, 27<sup>th</sup> April 2012**

- 4.2. No bids had been received for the 'Coordinating Climate Observations' tender. Andrea Turner will work to bring together the climate sub-group (chaired by Cathy Johnson) to review the project objectives and consider options to take the project forward. It was expected that the sub-group could identify relevant people and organisations to contact.

#### **ACTION 10: Andrea Turner to organise the first meeting of the climate sub-group to discuss options for the climate project, 30<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

- 4.3. The case studies work to identify catchments for a detailed investigation into opportunities for collaborative working has begun. Site information from two of the macronutrient test catchment projects have been sent to Helen Michell at NE for processing. One more catchment would be added when received. These will be analysed and investigated in further detail, adding other local projects such as NGO work and Local Authorities monitoring.
- 4.4. Rich Walmsley and Keith Porter will present a lessons learnt paper at the 16<sup>th</sup> MGM, to summarise the benefits and obstacles of collaborative working encountered through investigating site coincidences.

#### **5. Management Group matters**

- 5.1. Members were reminded to return signed cofounded agreements so the secretariat can raise invoices for 2012/13 subscriptions. Peter Costigan enquired as to when the current funding agreements were in place. Apart from Defra, which has agreed to fund UK-EOF until 2014, all other organisations have committed funding until 2013. Peter would feed this back into the Natural Environment White Paper update.
- 5.2. Rich Walmsley highlighted an action had not been noted in the 15<sup>th</sup> MGM minutes; Keith Porter and Rich Walmsley had agreed to write a lessons learnt paper for the 16<sup>th</sup> MGM. With the additional action noted as an amendment, the minutes were agreed. There are several outstanding actions from the 16<sup>th</sup> MGM and the following updates were given;
- *Action A – awaiting sign off from members.*
  - *Action B – mapping PID had been sent to Andy Nisbet and Rich Walmsley for sign off. Others on hold.*
  - *Action 1 – New CSA had been announced. Doug to approach as appropriate.*
  - *Action 7 – Bruce to send gridding data information.*
  - *Action 10 & 11 – members to return signed cofunding agreements.*
- 5.3. The 16<sup>th</sup> MG Meeting date has been set (27<sup>th</sup> June 2012) and the venue is yet to be confirmed. Amber Vater will investigate MRC availability in London.
- 5.4. Amber Vater will send a Doodle poll to agree the date and time for the 8<sup>th</sup> MG Teleconference to be held during late August or early September 2012.

**ACTION 11: Amber Vater to confirm location for the 16<sup>th</sup> MGM, 30<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

**ACTION 12: Amber Vater to send a Doodle poll to confirm a date and time for the 8<sup>th</sup> MGT, 30<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

**6. AOB**

- 6.1. Peter Costigan announced he would be unable to attend the 16<sup>th</sup> MGM and therefore this would be his last meeting before he retires at the end of June. Doug Wilson thanked Peter for his continued input and support to the UK-EOF, acknowledging Peter had been a Member of the Management Group since the UK-EOF was established in 2009.

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>
1 Amanda to ensure the wording in the papers refers to observations 'collected' by and not 'funded by' public organisations	Amanda Charles	14 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
2 Amber Vater to collate further information, from the suppliers of each dataset, to support why the datasets are critical to the UK	Amber Vater	1 <sup>st</sup> May 2012
3 Members to send suggestions of datasets which are currently 'at risk' to Amanda Charles, 27 <sup>th</sup> April 2012	All Members	27 <sup>th</sup> April 2012
4 Amanda Charles to send papers to Members before 14 <sup>th</sup> May	Amanda Charles	14 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
5 Amber Vater to send the Excel spreadsheet of critical observations to Members, 1 <sup>st</sup> May	Amber Vater	1 <sup>st</sup> May 2012
6 Amber Vater to send details of the Assessment against Need to Tim Pagella, 30 <sup>th</sup> May 2012	Amber Vater	30 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
7 Mary Barkham and Amber Vater to contact CEMS project and invite them to the DAG meeting in June, 30 <sup>th</sup> May 2012	Mary Barkham & Amber Vater	30 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
8 Amber Vater to ensure the academic community are represented at the DAG meeting, 30 <sup>th</sup> May 2012	Amber Vater	30 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
9 Andrea Turner to distribute details of the Citizen Science project to ensure Members have the opportunity to provide input, 27 <sup>th</sup> April 2012	Andrea Turner	27 <sup>th</sup> April 2012
10 Andrea Turner to organise the first meeting of the climate sub-group to discuss options for the climate project, 30 <sup>th</sup> May 2012	Andrea Turner	30 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
11 Amber Vater to confirm location for the 16 <sup>th</sup> MGM, 30 <sup>th</sup> May 2012	Amber Vater	30 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
12 Amber Vater to send a Doodle poll to confirm a date and time for the 8 <sup>th</sup> MGT, 30 <sup>th</sup> May 2012	Amber Vater	30 <sup>th</sup> May 2012