

## **UKEOF DNA Working Group and Steering Committee – Terms of Reference**

**April 2023**

### **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, facilitate method development, share learning and good practice, explore technical challenges, develop collaborative opportunities and leverage research funding.

The DNA Steering Committee co-ordinates and steers activities on behalf of the wider Working Group.

### **Terms of Reference**

The DNA Working Group will:

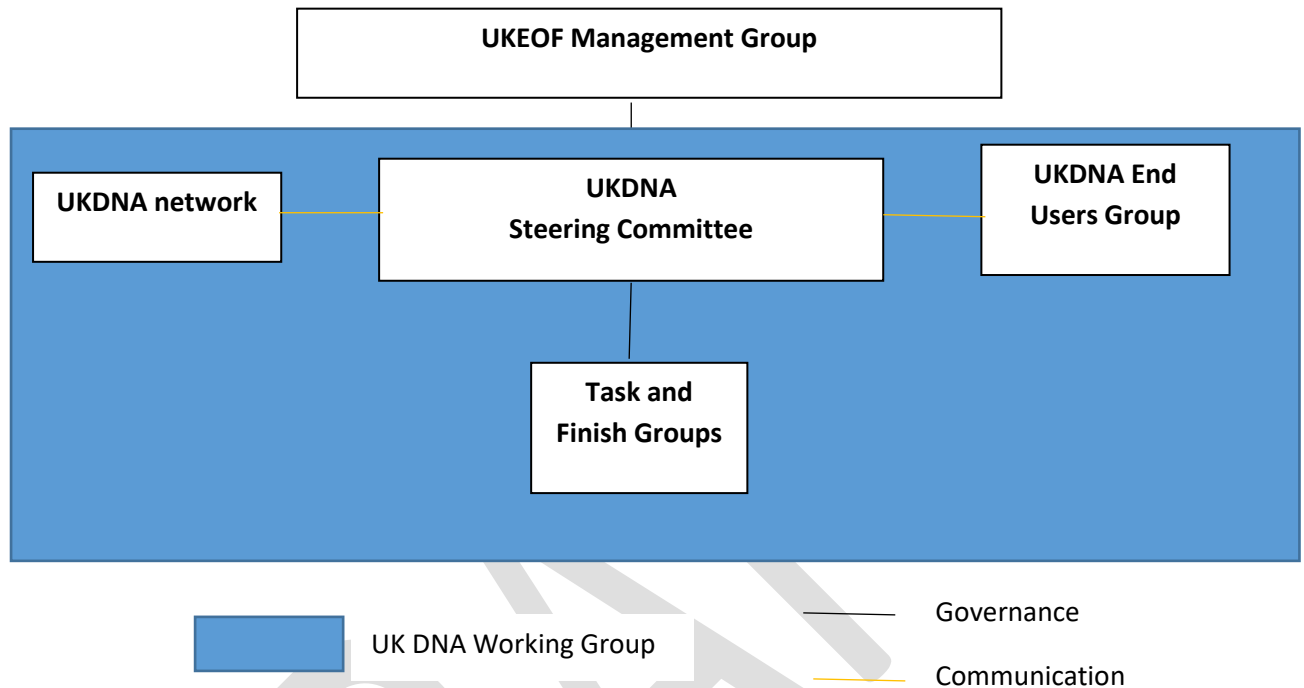
1. Provide a link between researchers, developers of DNA based monitoring methods, and end users to ensure that activities are focussed on meeting priority information needs and that knowledge is transferred effectively within the wider community.
2. Promote the use of DNA based methods and increase the awareness of the opportunities DNA based methods may provide to improve organisational efficiency and effectiveness.
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. Contribute to conferences, seminars and project groups.

The DNA Steering Committee will:

1. Produce an annual work plan for the UKEOF Management Group.
2. Organise conferences, workshops and seminars (in person or online).
3. Commission Task and Finish Groups to carry out pieces of work that support the purpose of the Working Group.

- Support communication with the wider UKDNA network<sup>1</sup> and the End Users Group<sup>2</sup> and engagement beyond the UKDNA Working Group.

## Governance



## Responsibilities and Ways of Working

The UKEOF DNA Steering Committee Group will meet quarterly by video conference and face to face once a year. 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 above.

Members of the Steering Committee will:

- Use the Terms of Reference to guide the activities of the Working Group.
- Input into the development and implementation of a deliverable work plan.
- Contribute to the delivery of agreed activities within allocated timescales, including leading Task and Finish Groups as needed.

<sup>1</sup> 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.

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

- 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 Steering Committee 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.

## **Membership**

Membership of the Steering Committee will comprise:

1. Representatives from UK agencies and governments (UK DNA End Users Group)
  - Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
  - Department for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Northern Ireland
  - Joint Nature Conservation Committee
  - Natural Resources Wales
  - Scottish Natural Heritage
  - Marine Scotland Science
  - Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science
  - Environment Agency
  - Scottish Environment Protection Agency
  - Natural England
  - Forest Research
2. UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (who also providing UKEOF secretariat), Natural History Museum and representatives from universities and research organisations including early careers researchers.
3. Representatives from business and industry
4. Representatives from non-governmental organisations

Members are expected to represent the group of organisations that they come from as well as their specific organisation or company. Individual's membership of the Steering Committee from research, business and NGOs will be reviewed after 3 years and may be reconfirmed for a further 3 years.