

**Minutes**  
from the  
**Peatland Working Group meeting**  
held at  
**The James Hutton Institute**  
on  
**Tuesday, 21 February 2012**

**1 Welcome & Introductions**

- 1.1 The James Hutton Institute & University of Aberdeen were thanked for hosting and funding the meeting.
- 1.2 Outcomes for the meeting were proposed
  - 1.2.1 Further review of the role of the Group
  - 1.2.2 Consider proposals about data collection from ongoing or planned peatland restoration projects
  - 1.2.3 A briefing about on-going research at JHI
  - 1.2.4 The progress of other initiatives
- 1.3 Progress since the last meeting:
  - 1.3.1 A webpage had been created on the Moorland Forum website to contain meeting documents & briefings and other research papers
  - 1.3.2 Briefings had been produced: a definition of biodiversity, carbon markets briefing and paying to restore peatland
  - 1.3.3 Other briefings were planned: a route map to a Peatland Code (Clifton Bain) and a list of players & the links between them (Clifton Bain, Mark Reed).
- 1.4 The Minutes of the Last Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2011 were approved. A summary of the Action Points is at Appendix 1 to these Minutes.

**2 Peatland restoration work – data collection**

- 2.1 Proposal to the Group
  - 2.1.1 Data should be collected about peatland restoration work in progress.
  - 2.1.2 Build on the information available from the Peat Compendium website.

## 2.2 Other issues

- 2.2.1 The information in the compendium from Scotland is very limited and it was suggested that it did not accurately reflect what was happening.
- 2.2.2 It was thought that 50-60 sites had received funding peatland restoration work.
- 2.2.3 Sources of information could include:
  - SRDP records – it was thought that there would be adequate justification for records to be released.
  - Land management organisations obtaining details from their members.
- 2.2.4 The data collection exercise would need to be seen to offer some tangible benefit for those providing the information. This could take the form of advice, providing access to funding or through knowledge exchange.
- 2.2.5 It would be necessary to define what was meant by peatland restoration work.
- 2.2.6 The aim of the exercise would be first to get an overview and then seek additional details in a form that would allow comparison between different projects.
- 2.2.7 It might be appropriate to focus on a gathering details information from a few locations where innovative work was taking place, ideally where site visits or demonstrations of the techniques could take place.

2.3 **Action:** A proposal document would be prepared and circulated to the group for comment. **Action: Mark Reed, Rebekka Artz**

## 3 Research Work

- 3.1 The Peatland Gateway was being developed as the successor to the IUCN UK Peatland Programme and this would be best placed to take the lead on coordinating peatland research. The Peatland Working Group would not tackle this.
- 3.2 It was expected that the Peatland Gateway would establish links to research organisations with a view to establishing who is doing what, where.
- 3.3 Rebekka Artz provided a summary of two on-going pieces of research that she is involved with at JHI:
  - 3.3.1 *Managing and restoring blanket bog to benefit biodiversity and carbon balance - a scoping study.* Commissioned Report to SNH.
    - This review includes an analysis and recommendation for priority areas for restoration based on multiple criteria analysis.
    - The report is in final draft form, awaiting approval from SNH for publication.
  - 3.3.2 *Review of the implications of a changing climate on the lowland raised bog condition in Scotland.* Commissioned report for IUCN/SWT.
    - Due for completion in March 2012.

## 4 IUCN UK Peatland Programme – update

- 4.1 Clifton Bain described the development of the Peatland Gateway
- 4.2 A draft paper: *Investing in Peatlands – Moving towards carbon funding* had been produced for Defra. This would cover the issues identified by the Group for *The Route Map to a Peatland Code* briefing. When in final form, this paper would be circulated to the Group. **Action: Clifton Bain, Mark Reed**
- 4.3 Following the launch in Holyrood in November, the report from the Commission of Inquiry, carried out as part of the Peatland Programme, would be launched in London and Stormont.
- 4.4 The Cairngorms National Park Authority planned to hold an event: *Making the Most of your Peat*. A consortium headed by the Peatland Gateway would be submitting a bid and introducing some funding to reduce the costs to the CNPA. It was hoped that this style of event could be offered in other parts of the country.
- 4.5 An approach had been made to the Western Isles Council and it was hoped to engage with representatives of the Council. There is a large amount of stored peat on Lewis.

## 5 International Briefing

- 5.1 The Durban conference in November 2011 had introduced a significant change to peatland accounting.
- 5.1.1 The IUCN UK Peatland Programme had produced a briefing: *Kyoto Protocol and National Accounting for Peatlands* that had been made available from the Group's webpage.
- 5.2 The 14th International Peat Congress, would be held in Stockholm, Sweden 3-8 June 2012.

## 6 Other Initiatives

- 6.1 2020 Climate Group – Land Use & Forestry Sub-Group
- 6.1.1 Chairman – Stuart Goodall, Confor
- 6.1.2 MSc project briefing – Edinburgh University
- Support from a team of 4 students from Edinburgh University's Masters in Carbon Finance programme
  - Students carrying out research for the subgroup, reporting back by end of March.
  - Work will provide a useful baseline (e.g. what schemes operate internationally) and what options/prospects/success factors require to be addressed and further evaluated.

## 6.2 The Environmental Research Institute

- 6.2.1 Planning to hold an event in September / October with CEH and RSPB relating to Science in the Flow Country.
- 6.2.2 The event will take place in Caithness and consist of a field visit to the Forsinard site, followed by a day of conference then a workshop looking to identify future research needs (both held in Thurso).
- 6.2.3 The conference will consist of keynotes plus open podium and poster presentations.
- 6.2.4 A first call will go out next month (once Roxane Andersen is in post). Details will be sent to the Moorland Forum for circulation.

## 6.3 ACES

- 6.3.1 Payment for Ecosystem Services Best Practice Guidelines:
  - peatland round-table at NERC event on 13th March
  - see handout for overview of progress so far
- 6.3.2 Schools work programme on peatlands being developed in March (see project brief)
- 6.3.3 Proposed DEFRA EKN peatland outreach programme
- 6.3.4 Peatland Gateway to be launched – agency funding, support in-kind from CECC
- 6.3.5 Valuing Nature Networks project
  - See flyer
  - New website
  - Event with water@leeds
  - Workshop report draft
- 6.3.6 Peatland code
  - Draft road map for DEFRA – needs to be updated with VNN inputs
- 6.3.7 IUCN policy brief on Kyoto carbon funding
  - Positive initial response from Stewart Stevenson
  - meeting Richard Benyon and civil servants in March with IUCN

## 6.4 Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation (ECCI)

- 6.4.1 Director - Andy Kerr. Also a member of the 2020 Climate Group
- 6.4.2 Mainly working on energy consumption
- 6.4.3 Wants to stay in touch with the work of the Group

## 6.5 Scottish Government

- 6.5.1 Land Use Strategy Action Plan
- 6.5.2 Discussion took place about Objective 2 Proposal 9 that was relevant to the Group – “Develop a methodology to take account of changes in soil carbon for carbon accounting purposes”.

## 6.6 Natural England – Peatland Restoration Guidelines were discussed.

## 6.7 The Environment Bank – David Hill, Tom Tew

- 6.7.1 Private sector will be the driver for carbon trading

- 6.7.2 International standards very expensive, no money until 5yrs into programme, designed for forestry in developing countries.
- 6.7.3 Voluntary scheme preferred – compliance mechanisms
- 6.7.4 Value of incentive needs to be reviewed – made more attractive.

## 6.8 Ecosystem Markets Task Force

- 6.8.1 Led by Ian Cheshire, Group Chief Executive of retail group Kingfisher plc – launched 23 Nov 11
- 6.8.2 Review the opportunities available to UK business that could help them develop green goods, services, investment vehicles and markets which value and protect the environment.
- 6.8.3 Brings together industry leaders and experts from a wide range of sectors.
- 6.8.4 Report back to the Government in early 2013 through the Green Economy Council.
- 6.8.5 Working on proposals for a Peatland Code.

## 6.9 SAC Carbon Management Centre – Dr Bob Rees

- 6.9.1 Very supportive
- 6.9.2 Economics group within centre interest in trading options
- 6.9.3 Mainly working on reducing agricultural emissions
- 6.9.4 Recommended contact with CEH
- 6.9.5 Importance of peatlands – large land area / quantity of peat in one ownership

## 7 Governance

- 7.1 No changes were planned to the membership of the Group, but it was intended to keep this fluid.
- 7.2 Funding for the Group was uncertain. The Group had been tacked onto the Moorland Forum but no additional funding had been provided to set up and run the meetings.
- 7.3 SSE Renewables had launched the ‘Scotland Sustainable Energy Fund’ in November 2011. It might offer a route to funding and this would be investigated. **Action: Chairman**
- 7.4 It was agreed that the Group should aim to meet twice each year. A provisional date for the next meeting was agreed as Tuesday, 16 October.
- 7.5 Suggestions for a venue were requested.