



Note on the first meeting of the Coordination Team¹

The first meeting was held in the European Environment Agency, Copenhagen on 7 July 2004. It was chaired by Gordon McInnes (EEA) and attended by Dominique Richard (ETC nature protection and biodiversity), Ben Delbaere (European Centre for Nature Conservation), Jerry Harrison (UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre), Jan Plesnik (representing the Czech Republic as lead country for PEBLDS action plan on biodiversity for monitoring and indicators) and Malgorzata Buszko-Briggs (Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forest in Europe Liaison Unit). Anne Teller (DG Environment) and Ivonne Higuero (PEBLDS Secretariat) were invited along with MCPFE to the first meeting as major international clients but were unable to attend. Tor-Björn Larsson (EEA) and Sophie Condé (ETC) also attended as observers.

The meeting considered the following agenda items:

1. Coordination Team mandate and terms of reference

The Coordination Team's mandate is established in the PEBLDS action plan for biodiversity monitoring and indicators as finalised after the PEBLDS bureau meeting in May (STRA-CO (2004) 3f rev - attached) and in the Message from Malahide² and Malahide main paper on indicators (Malahide/MP/Indicators³). Additional details were also provided in the paper presented to the EU Biodiversity Expert Group Meeting on 28 April 2004 (attached).

Participants in the meeting welcomed the mandate given to work on indicators at the various European levels in the PEBLDS action plan, the Message from Malahide and the conclusions of the Environment Council meeting held on 28 June. While concerns were raised that there was no explicit mention of the coordination team in the Message from Malahide, it was generally considered that, with these mandates and the earlier discussion on the need for coordination to achieve these mandates, there was a sufficient degree of acceptance of the role of the coordination team at the national level and within the Commission for work to continue.

Participants agreed that the objectives for the coordination team and expert groups should be based on the proposal from the joint Eionet/IWG-BioMIN/PEBLDS meeting with the addition of reference to current activities and good practice:

- To improve coordination, exchange of information and collaboration on biodiversity-related indicator and monitoring activities building on current activities and good practice
- To advise and collaborate in consolidating, testing, refining, documenting and producing workable sets of policy-relevant biodiversity indicators, such as to be used for assessments (considering also their wider use and applicability within other relevant indicator frameworks)
- To help ensure adequate funding for monitoring, indicators and assessments to support implementation and achievement of the policy decisions and targets.

Finally, participants agreed that full terms of reference for the coordination team and expert groups should be included in the detailed work plan. In developing these

¹ The team considered several titles for itself including various combination of the words European 2010 Biodiversity Indicators Coordination without reaching a decision, so the short title remains for the moment!

² http://www.eu2004.ie/templates/document_file.asp?id=17810

³ http://www.eu2004.ie/templates/document_file.asp?id=17051

terms of reference, the style of terms of reference established for the UNECE working group on environmental monitoring and assessment would be taken into account.

In order to prevent confusion, it was agreed to take into account – and possibly review – the mandates of the European biodiversity monitoring and indicator framework (EBMI-F) and the International working Group on biodiversity monitoring and indicators (IWG-BioMIN).

2. Composition of the Coordination Team

Participants agreed to keep the coordination team small, initially involving EEA and its ETC on biodiversity, ECNC and UNEP-WCMC as proposed in the paper on the outcome of the joint meeting. Following proposals from various NGOs asking to participate in the coordination team it was agreed to consider proposals for participation of an NGO representing a broad spectrum of biodiversity in Europe if received. It was also agreed that representatives of the main international clients, countries and other NGOs would not be included in the coordination team but would be included in expert groups and would be kept fully informed of the coordination team's work.

3. Resources for Coordination Team – time and budget, 2004 and beyond

A first check on time likely to be available from EEA/ETC, ECNC and UNEP-WCMC for the coordination team in the remainder of 2004 indicated a total of approximately 130 days.

Funding from the EEA core budget plus additional funding from DG Environment for work on biodiversity indicators and monitoring (currently being negotiated by EEA) and from other sources to support EECCA country participation should be able to support 0.5-1.0 year's work each year by the coordination team and expert groups in the initial phase of work in 2005-2008. The chairman indicated that EEA was also continuing to try to get Community funding to support EECCA countries (in a range of activities including biodiversity) and B Delbaere agreed to consult with I Higuero on possible UNEP/Council of Europe support to these countries.

Participants raised concern over the possible production of an EU red list as part of the additional funding from DG Environment, since it was considered that this was potentially a large project in its own right.

4. Preparation of work plan – outline, contributions and timetable

It was agreed that the work plan should be drafted by end of August 2004 for distribution to the widest possible range of interested parties for comment and to seek 'volunteers' to participate in the proposed expert groups. B Delbaere agreed to prepare a first draft by 23 July for distribution to participants for comments to him by 13 August.

The draft work plan for the coordination team and expert groups should include sections on the background to creation of the coordination team/expert groups, related activities, time schedule for the work, what is to be done and how to do it, and links to clients for the work. The work plan should cover the period 2004-2010, with details provided for the initial phase in 2004-2006.

It was also agreed that the work plan and all documents prepared by the coordination team and expert groups would be made available electronically via the EEA's CIRCLE document management system.

5. Expert Groups – links to CBD/PEBLDS/EU indicator lists, first priorities, possible participants, possible leaders

The CBD/COP7 decision lists indicators for immediate testing and others for further development. The EU list includes all the CBD indicators for immediate testing and some additions. The pan-European list prepared at the joint meeting in April is still to be adopted by the PEBLDS Bureau but only provides minor nuances to the adopted CBD/EU lists. Hence it was agreed that the CBD, PEBLDS and EU lists provided a coherent basis for developing one set of indicators relevant to pan-Europe. J Harrison indicated that the CBD Secretariat was preparing initial documentation on the indicators for immediate testing which was due to be released and would need to be taken into account by the coordination team and relevant expert groups.

The main paper on Indicators presented at Malahide proposed that six expert groups covering 12 indicators from the CBD/EU lists should be established in the first implementation phase. The six groups proposed are: species, area, threats, ecosystem, sustainable use and genetics (see Malahide/MP/Indicators⁴).

Participants reviewed this proposal and made a few proposals for revisions as summarised in annex 1. These revisions recognise that some focal areas and proposed indicators are more developed than others and that it should be possible for the coordination team with the support of 1-2 specific experts to pick up quickly on work carried out in other activities (for example MCPFE, UNFCCC and UNECE Convention on long-range transboundary air pollution) rather than establish new expert groups. It was recognised that once groups are established they may make proposals for sub-groups to consider specific sub-indicators, for example for different groups of species.

As indicated above, it was agreed that 'volunteers' should be sought from the widest possible range of interested international organisations, countries and NGOs to participate in the expert groups and also to lead such groups. It was recognised that we are not looking for unpaid 'volunteers' (rather for experts to 'volunteer' to participate in the experts groups as extensions of their current work) and hence that additional funding would be necessary to support the work of some of these 'volunteers'.

6. Expectations from Expert Groups – testing, developing, documenting indicators and subsequent monitoring requirements

It was agreed that each expert group should include an adequate and appropriate range of technical expertise and geographical coverage. It was also agreed to develop details on the expectations from expert groups in the work plan and to try to convene a kick-off meeting for expert group participants before the end of 2004, probably in late October/early November.

⁴ http://www.eu2004.ie/templates/document_file.asp?id=17051

7. Support for Expert Groups - 2004 and beyond, involving experts from EECCA countries

It was agreed that as far as possible coordination team members should participate in and support (but not lead) each of the expert groups. The EEA core budget would provide limited support to the coordination team and expert groups. Additional funding from DG Environment and elsewhere, currently being considered, would be necessary to provide adequate funding and support as endorsed in the Message from Malahide. The amount of funding available would determine how much expert time, travel and meetings could be supported.

8. Informing stakeholders – who are they, upcoming events, written communication etc

It was agreed that the widest possible range of interested parties should be involved in and informed about the work plan, coordination team and expert groups. These included:

- CBD Secretariat, PEBLDS Secretariat, MCPFE Liaison Unit, DG Environment and countries (including Eionet partners) as key clients;
- SBSTTA, Ad-hoc technical expert group on baseline, targets and indicators, European biodiversity monitoring and indicators framework (EBMI-F), International working group on biodiversity monitoring and indicators (IWG-BioMIN), EU biodiversity expert group, ORNIS/Habitats Committees and the European platform for biodiversity research strategy (EPBRS) as major relevant technical forums;
- Eurostat, IUCN, OECD and RAMSAR Secretariat as international organisations with related activities; and
- the Netherlands, Luxembourg and United Kingdom with respectively the current and 2005 EU Presidencies which may include initiative on biodiversity monitoring and indicators.

B Delbaere informed the participants about a possible conference on a European biodiversity monitoring strategy under the Dutch EU Presidency this year. It was agreed that synergy between this activity and the coordination team should be ensured and that hence that B Delbaere should make contact with the initiators of this conference.

9. Links to other indicator activities – SD indicators, structural indicators, EEA core set, Bio-IMPs, UNEP-WCMC pilot study, MCPFE indicators on sustainable forest management, OECD etc

Links to these and other activities were discussed.

Gordon McInnes
Copenhagen
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Annex 1 Proposal for allocation of indicators to expert groups or coordination team

Focal area	Indicators	Expert group	Coordination team (with 1-2 specific experts)
Status and trends of the components of biological diversity	Trends in abundance and distribution of selected species	X	
	Change in status of threatened and/or protected species		
	Trends in extent of selected biomes, ecosystems and habitats	X	
	Connectivity/fragmentation of ecosystems (<i>from focal area 'Ecosystem integrity and ecosystem goods and services'</i>)		
	Trends in genetic diversity of domesticated animals, cultivated plants, and fish species of major socioeconomic importance	X	
	Coverage of protected areas		X
Threats to biodiversity	Nitrogen deposition	X	
	Number and costs of invasive alien species	X	
	Impact of climate change on biodiversity		X
Ecosystem integrity and ecosystem goods and services	Marine trophic index		X
	<i>Connectivity/fragmentation of ecosystems (see above)</i>	-	
	Water quality in aquatic ecosystems		X
Sustainable use	Area of forest, agricultural, fishery and ecosystems under sustainable management	X	
Status of access and benefits sharing	Percentage of European patent applications for inventions based on genetic resources and/or traditional knowledge that disclose the source of these resources and knowledge		X
Status of resource transfers and use	Funding to biodiversity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ in economic and development cooperation (response) ▪ in EU research, monitoring and management 		X
Public opinion (additional EU focal area)	Public awareness and participation		X