



International Expert Workshop on the 2010 Biodiversity Indicators and Post-2010 Indicator Development

A workshop convened by the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC)

In cooperation with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Hosted by the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), with funding provided by the European Commission (EC), the UK Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

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The UK Biodiversity Indicators

www.jncc.gov.uk/biyp

Introductory briefing

Support for the workshop provided by the following:



Background

1. In 2006, the UK Biodiversity Partnership, with input from Government, devolved administrations, agencies and the voluntary sector, agreed to develop a set of 18 UK indicators to provide evidence to underpin assessments of progress to the 2010 target.
2. Eighteen headline indicators were identified, covering six 'focal' areas:
 - Status and trends in biodiversity;
 - Sustainable use;
 - Threats to biodiversity;
 - Ecosystem integrity/ecosystem goods and services;
 - Resource transfers (i.e. funding);
 - Public awareness and participation.
3. In order to minimise reporting burdens, the UK indicator set draws on indicators already used in country biodiversity and sustainable development strategies, taking account of the availability and consistency of data at the UK level. Twelve indicators were compiled and refined from existing sources. Six required significant development work. Most indicators show more than one piece of information; each 'measure' within the indicator is assessed separately.

Use

4. The UK Biodiversity Indicators 2009 update, with 17 completed indicators, was published on the web on 3rd April 2009 and subsequently incorporated into the 4th National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity to underpin the assessment of progress against the 2010 target, and the goals of the CBD strategic plan.
5. A summary version, in hard copy, was published as UK Biodiversity Indicators in Your Pocket on May 22nd 2009. Copies have been distributed widely.
6. Overall in 2009, 23 (72%) of the 32 measures (in the 17 indicators which are assessed) are 'improving' or show 'little or no overall change' since the year 2000.

Lessons learnt

7. There has been no formal review of the indicators. However, the UK biodiversity indicators project team have identified some generic lessons:
 - a. The importance of partnerships. Much of the data, particularly on status and trends, comes from the voluntary sector and the support of the voluntary sector in the management of the process has led to wider acceptance.
 - b. The importance of objective assessment. The indicators are presented with an assessment of change over time rather than any assessment of whether the current position is good, bad or indifferent. This allows the indicators to be updated and presented as impartial statistics, free from political decisions.
 - c. Making the best of what is available. Careful consideration of existing data has enabled its use for this purpose without creating new (probably expensive) monitoring.

Future Plans

8. The UK Biodiversity Indicators are managed by a Steering Group of UK representatives charged with ensuring that the indicators remain relevant, representative and reliable.
9. An update of these indicators is being planned for 2010, and it is likely that some indicators will be reviewed after CBD CoP10 in Japan.

Overview of assessment of change for all indicators

Traffic light assessments over the longer term and since 2000, for the 18 indicators and their 33 component measures.

Focal area, indicator number, title and individual measure(s) (where applicable)		Long term change ³	Change since 2000
Focal area 1. Status and trends of the components of biological diversity			
1a. Populations of selected species (birds)	Breeding farmland birds	✘ 1970 – 2007	✘
	Breeding woodland birds	✘ 1970 – 2007	≈
	Breeding water and wetland birds	✘ 1975 – 2007	≈
	Breeding seabirds	✔ 1970 – 2007	✘
	Wintering waterbirds	✔ 1975-6 – 2006-7	✘
1b. Populations of selected species (butterflies)	Semi-natural habitat specialists	✘ 1976 – 2007	≈
	Generalist butterflies	≈ 1976 – 2007	≈
1c. Populations of selected species (bats)		✘ 1978 – 1992	✔
2. Plant diversity	Arable and horticultural land	✔ 1990 – 2007	✔
	Woodland and grassland	✘ 1990 – 2007	✘
	Boundary habitats	✘ 1990 – 2007	✘
3. UK Priority Species		☹	✔
4. UK Priority Habitats		☹	≈
5. Genetic diversity	Native sheep breeds	☹	≈
	Native cattle breeds	☹	✔
6. Protected sites	Extent of protected sites	✔ 1996 – 2008	✔
	Condition of protected sites	☹	☹
Focal area 2. Sustainable use			
7. Woodland management		☹	✔
8. Agri-environment land	Higher level, targeted schemes	✔ 1992 – 2008	✔
	Entry type schemes	☹	✔
9. Sustainable fisheries		✔ 1990 – 2007	✔

Focal area, indicator number, title and individual measure(s) (where applicable)		Long term change ³	Change since 2000
Focal area 3. Threats to biodiversity			
10. Impact of air pollution	Acidity	✔ 1996 – 2005	≈
	Nitrogen	✔ 1996 – 2005	≈
11. Invasive species	Freshwater species	✘ 1960 – 2008	≈
	Marine species	✘ 1960 – 2008	✘
	Terrestrial species	✘ 1960 – 2008	✘
12. Spring index		Not assessed	Not assessed
Focal area 4. Ecosystem integrity and ecosystem goods and services			
13. Marine ecosystem integrity		✘ 1982 – 2008	≈
14. Habitat connectivity		☹	☹
15. Biological river quality		✔ 1990 – 2006	✔
Focal area 5. Status of resource transfers and use			
16. UK biodiversity expenditure		☹	✔
17. Global biodiversity expenditure		☹	✔
Focal area 6. Public awareness and participation			
18. Conservation volunteering		☹	✔

- ✔ improving
- ≈ little or no overall change
- ✘ Deteriorating
- ☹ insufficient or no comparable data

