

UK Plant Genetic Resources Group

Minutes of the UKPGR meeting held on 15th March 2018, 11:00 – 15:30
At DEFRA, London Nobel House

Nigel Maxted, University of Birmingham (Chair: NM)
Simon Toomer, National Trust (ST)
Matt Ordidge, National Fruit Collection (MO)
Chris Barker, Defra (CB)
Thomas Murphy, Defra (TM)
Sue Goligher, Defra (SG)
Charlotte Allender, University of Warwick (CA)
Sean May, University of Nottingham (SM)
Gaynor McKenzie, James Hutton Institute (GM)

Kalani Seymour, Plant Heritage (KL)
Catrin Fenton, Garden Organic (CF)
John Dickie, Kew (JD)
Noam Chayut, JIC (NC)
James Williams, JNCC (JW)
Julian Hosking (JH)
Tom Christie, SASA (TC)
Ianto Thomas, Aberystwyth University (IT)
Solomy Nantege, Defra Admin (SN)

UKPGR national inventory/PGR biodiversity indicator meeting, 11:00 – 13:00

James Williams from JNCC gave a presentation on UK Biodiversity Indicators and how these could be improved for the 2020 review. A number of queries were raised about the current basis for calculating the indicator. It was felt that the current approach was unsatisfactory and an improved basis that was scientifically justifiable needed to be worked up.
ACTION: James to liaise with the subgroup formed to develop a clear replacement for the current indicator by end of May 2018 for it to be considered for the 2020 review.

Full UKPGR Meeting 13:30 – 15:30

18/01 Apologies (NM)

Lydia Smith (NIAB), Felicidad Fernandez (EMR), Ruth Eastwood (Kew), Penny Maplestone (BSPB), James Armitage (RHS), Karen Bradley (DEFRA), Andrew Daymond (University of Reading), Christine Holleran (DEFRA), Peter Hoebe (SCRUC), Alessandro Moscuza (DFID) and Frances Gawthrop (Tozer Seeds).

The meeting was chaired by Nigel Maxted (NM).

The meeting started with **NM** giving a summary of the Biodiversity indicator meeting held earlier in the day.

18/02 Minutes of the meeting held on 9th November 2017 (NM)

Minutes agreed.

18/03 Matters arising (NM)

NM reminded the group about the original intention to discuss DSI issues at the current meeting. It was agreed that this should be rolled over to the next meeting.

ACTION: DEFRA to add DSI to the next meeting's agenda and recirculate relevant information closer to the meeting date.

18/04 Update on the Nagoya Protocol (TM)

TM gave an update on the Nagoya Protocol which included; an EU expert meeting to discuss unresolved issues surrounding the sectorial guidance on the EU regulations, BEIS to attend the EU National competent Authorities meeting in April, and a deep dive in Belfast to look at the practicalities of moving Nagoya from EU to UK legislation. In preparation of the upcoming international meeting on Nagoya in July (in lead up to the main Conference of Parties in November) Defra will host a Nagoya specific stakeholder event on topics around the Protocol,

ST highlighted the difference between countries in terms of access to genetic resources information and asked for clarity on the use and interpretation of the term utilisation. **TM** mentioned that there was a lack of clarity between EU legislation and Access Legislation. **TM** explained that the EU regulation is limited in scope, it only covers utilization of a resource within the EU. Utilisation is defined in the legislation and you only fall in scope if under taking utilization (R&D). However the country from which you take the Generic

Resource will have access legislation. The scope of this is determined by each provider country as is what utilization is. Therefore you may find yourself out of the scope of the EU regulation but in scope of access legislation. This was the theme of the Plant Network discussion and slides can be provided.

JH asked if Nagoya had any interest in Intellectual property rights and genetic resources to which **TM** confirmed an overlap and mentioned a meeting recently held with the Intellectual Property office in the UK.

ACTIONS UKPGR /TM:

1. Individuals interested in participating in the stakeholder event to contact **TM** to be added to the mail list.
2. **TM** to share plant network slides regarding utilisation in the UK with the group.

18/05 Breadth of material included in UK national PGR inventory (NM/IT)

NM asked the group whether the traditional remit of focusing on food and agriculture should be retained for the inventory or whether botanic gardens, crop wild relatives, and ornamentals, etc. should also be covered. He suggested compiling a list of taxa that the UK national PGR inventory is interested in/ already reporting on, as a basis for identifying what else could be included.

ACTION: **NM** to circulate Annex 1 of the Plant Treaty for the group to suggest any possible additions.

18/06 Orchard network update (MO)

MO mentioned that there was nothing new to report. He suggested that updates on the Orchard Network should not be a running agenda item.

ACTION: **MO** to notify the Secretariat ahead of UKPGR meetings on whether he will be giving any updates.

18/07 EU Exit

SG reported that several deep dives on different topics had been held with Devolved Administrations. **TC** mentioned a recently concluded one on plant variety rights and seeds.

18/08 ECPGR Update (Defra)

SG reported that the next ECPGR steering committee meeting will take place in May and **NM** will be attending on behalf of DEFRA. She asked those who would like more information or have feedback to get in touch with **NM**.

NM reported on a lack of transparency and democracy within ECPGR that he had noticed from a previous working group chairs' meeting. He mentioned that he planned to follow up on a suggestion he had made at the previous meeting for the structure whereby the working groups are not represented in the steering groups to be revised.

CA mentioned that work on the beet collection held at Birmingham University was on hold due to budget cuts. She added that she had opened this work up to student projects/internships in order to avoid any additional costs but she is yet to receive any responses.

18/09 PGR applications/project news (NM)

Each member of the UKPGR group gave an update on current projects and activities they are involved with.

NM reported that there is a push for a forestry group, independent from the UKPGR group, to be set up but he had urged the forestry group to maintain communication with UKPGR to avoid duplications.

ACTION: **CA** to circulate details about a PhD project open for applications – looking at diversity in cleome – to the group mail list.

18/10 Update on European funding opportunities (CB)

CB gave a short update on Horizon 2020 Societal Challenge 2 (Food security, sustainable agriculture etc.). Firstly, he notified the group about the completion of the 2017 work programme, with over €400 million allocated to 75 new research projects; of which €4 million went towards two PGR related projects – Farmers Pride (UK coordinated) and the Belgian led Dynaversity project focusing on seed networks to facilitate knowledge exchange.

CB reported that calls for the 2018 work programme, which opened last October, were now closed for the single stage proposals with the project evaluation outcome set to be back by July 2018. The Commission is finalizing the 2019 work programme text which is expected to be adopted by mid-July and the call to open in October 2018, with the closing date in January 2019. The 2018 work programme included indicative topic titles for the 2020 work programme call and the Commission is currently developing the first 2020 WP draft

text to present to the programme committee in June. The work programme covering the 2018-20 period can be found [here](#), with the parts related to 2019 and 2020 provided on an indicative basis.

CB stressed that the UK's eligibility to participate in Horizon 2020 remained unchanged. However, in the event that the commitments made in the UK-EC Joint Report (December 2017) were not met, the Government's underwrite guarantee remained in place with funding guaranteed to entities whose successful applications are submitted before UK leaves the EU. This information, published by BEIS, can be found [here](#).

CB ended with giving information on the Government's plans post 2020; the Government is working on a Research and Innovation agreement with the EU which could enable the UK to participate in certain key programmes, including future Framework Programmes. The government's views on how the Ninth Framework Programme should be developed can be found in this [position paper](#) published by BEIS on gov.uk.

ACTION: CB to send the above information to the group mail list.

18/11

AOB (NM)

- **NM** noted that Mike Ambrose's position of deputy chair is yet to be filled and asked members who were interested to send their nominations to the DEFRA secretariat.
- **NM** also mentioned a PQ from the Ministers about how much material from UK genebanks was being sent to Svalbard. It was reported that not much was being submitted at present but **CA** and **NC** indicated that this was under consideration by their respective genebanks.
- **IT** urged the group to send their data as soon as possible for the EURISCO update which is scheduled to be completed by end of April. He also informed the group that he will be retiring in December but his replacement is yet to be announced. He hoped to bring his successor along to the next meeting.
- **SM** asked the group to consider adding Joanne Russell to the group as a James Hutton representative, to which the group had no objection.
- Kew (Millennium Seed Bank) offered to hold the 2018 summer technical meeting. **ACTION: JD** to forward a range of dates to the group mail list for members to indicate their availability.

18/12

Date of next meeting (NM)

Wednesday 17th October 2018