



Example: ToR UK NEA

UK National Ecosystem Assessment: Terms of Reference for User Group

1. Background

The National Ecosystem Assessment is a two year project covering the terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystems of the UK, which will:

- give us a clear view of the current and possible future state of the natural environment and the provision of ecosystem services, mainly by synthesising and coordinating existing evidence, exploring future scenarios and possible policy responses
- create a compelling and coherent narrative on the state and value of the natural environment and ecosystem services, to help raise awareness of their importance to human well-being and future economic prosperity
- be achieved through an inclusive process that encourages different stakeholders and communities of interest to interact and share learning, and in particular to foster better inter-disciplinary cooperation between natural and social scientists.

Following the methodology adopted by the global Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA), this National Ecosystem Assessment will be conducted in two phases. Phase I, which is intended to report in February 2010, will focus on the current state of our ecosystems and the services they provide to the economy and society. Phase II, due to report in February 2011, will develop possible future scenarios by analysing trends and pressures, and identify possible policy responses.

A User Group, formed from a representative variety of the likely customers or 'users', of the Assessment's outputs, will be established to provide the insight necessary to enable its outputs to be as useful as possible in future.

2. Membership

The User Group will include approximately 20 representatives from organisations representing key customers, or users, of the National Ecosystem Assessment. This will include representatives from a range of public, private and third sector organisations.

As far as is possible, the Group's membership should be set at the outset. In exceptional circumstance, and with the agreement of the Co-Chairs and Client Group, should additional organisations/ end customers of the Assessment be added as it progresses.

3. Role of the User Group

The User Group will help inform the approach and dissemination of the National Ecosystem Assessment as it is taken forward by an independent scientific Secretariat, to ensure that the evidence and outputs it delivers meet the specific needs of key user groups, thereby maximising its impact, influence and utility.

In particular the User Group will:

- Provide insight to the Secretariat and Expert Panel as to the needs of their particular sectors that are relevant to shaping the NEA.
- Review assessment outputs as they are generated by the Secretariat and Expert Panel, ensuring that format and style and content & relevance are suitable for target user groups.



- Assist with stakeholder engagement during the Assessment by liaising with existing networks to seek views & disseminate information
- Assist with facilitating the uptake of outputs within their represented sector.
- Advise & assist with providing access to data & key information sources & expertise
- Identification & promotion of synergies with other related initiatives in the UK and internationally

4. Meetings

The User Group will meet at key stages throughout the project (up to four times during the Assessment) and often at the same time as the Expert Panel and Client Group.

5. Chairing the User Group

Each meeting will be chaired by a member of the Secretariat

National Ecosystem Assessment: Terms of Reference for Client Group

1. Background

The National Ecosystem Assessment is a two year project covering the terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystems of the UK, which will:

- give us a clear view of the current and possible future state of the natural environment and the provision of ecosystem services, mainly by synthesising and coordinating existing evidence, exploring future scenarios and possible policy responses
- create a compelling and coherent narrative on the state and value of the natural environment and ecosystem services, to help raise awareness of their importance to human well-being and future economic prosperity
- be achieved through an inclusive process that encourages different stakeholders and communities of interest to interact and share learning, and in particular to foster better inter-disciplinary cooperation between natural and social scientists.

Following the methodology adopted by the global Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA), this National Ecosystem Assessment will be conducted in two phases. Phase I, which is intended to report by the end of 2009, will focus on the current state of our ecosystems and the services they provide to the economy and society. Phase II, due to report at the end of 2010, will develop possible future scenarios by analysing trends and pressures, and identify possible policy responses.

A small Client Group, formed from a maximum of two representatives of each of the main customers of the assessment will be established to take decisions about matters which represent the views of its component organisations about the running of the project and delivery of outputs.

2. Membership

The Client Group will include up to one science and one policy representative from each of the customer organisations of the National Ecosystem Assessment. These are currently:

- The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
- The Scottish Executive
- The Welsh Assembly Government
- The Northern Ireland Executive
- The Natural Environment Research Council



The Group's membership may change, with the agreement of the current members, to accommodate additional organisations that become significant direct customers of the Assessment as it progresses.

3. Role of the Client Group

The Client Group will take decisions to guide the National Ecosystem Assessment (NEA), as it is taken forward by an independent scientific Secretariat (who will be contracted by the Client Group), ensuring that the Assessment is delivered in a way which meets its agreed objectives.

In particular the Client Group will have lead responsibility for:

- Reviewing and agreeing the Assessment's project plan and any changes to it, which will be drafted by the Secretariat, ensuring that the project is adequately resourced, that deliverables are clear, and that timescales and milestones are realistic.
- Agreeing with the Co-Chairs and Secretariat the composition of the Expert Panel for the Assessment, ensuring that the mix of expertise provides the scientific, social, policy and economic skills required for undertaking a robust, multi-disciplinary assessment.
- Providing final clearance on any proposals for commissioning additional evidence and analysis to address identified evidence gaps where this requires financial support from any member of the Group.
- Working with the Expert Panel, Co-Chairs and Secretariat to agree country-specific aspects of scenarios for the provision of ecosystem services in future.
- Reviewing and agreeing with the Co-Chairs all executive summaries prior to publication.
- Reviewing and agreeing final reports for publication and dissemination, in consultation with communications teams.

Additionally, throughout the Assessment, the Client Group will:

- Work closely with the Expert Panel, Co-Chairs and Secretariat from an early stage to identify and resolve key challenges relating to the Assessment's scope and content.
- Assist with the identification of relevant scientific, economic, and social data sources required for the Assessment and facilitate the Secretariat's access to these resources.
- Ensure that, in developing the Assessment, the Secretariat takes account of wider national and international initiatives relevant to the NEA, and that it complements rather than duplicates such initiatives
- Establish and maintain formal links with key delivery bodies, who will be both customers of and data providers to the Assessment, ensuring that their views are sought and appropriately reflected where relevant in decisions made throughout the project.
- Monitor progress of the project against agreed milestones and advise the Secretariat in resolving any emerging risks to delivery that arise.
- Review assessment outputs as they are generated by the Secretariat and Expert Panel, ensuring that analysis and any conclusions take account of policy and other current initiatives of relevance to the outputs of the NEA.
- Advise the Expert Panel, Co-Chairs and Secretariat in the handling and presentation of policy responses in the context of different decision making structures and policy backgrounds in the different Administrations.

4. Chairing the Client Group

Each meeting will be chaired by a member of the Client Group to be agreed at the previous meeting. The first meeting will be chaired by a Defra representative.



5. Meetings

The Client Group will meet at key stages throughout the project (up to six times per year). This will include progress meetings with the Co-Chairs and the Secretariat.

6. Devolved issues

This will be a UK-wide assessment, which will require input and co-operation from all UK Administrations, and consensus will need to be reached by the Client Group and Co-Chairs on decisions that impact on the Assessment as a whole - particularly during the initial evidence gathering phase of the project. However, it is recognised that certain policy issues are likely to arise which will be specific to individual Administrations. In such cases, the representative of the given Administration will have the final say about matters specific to their country.

National Ecosystem Assessment:

Responsibilities of the Co-Chairs

Agreeing with the Client Group the composition of the Expert Panel for the Assessment, ensuring that the mix of expertise provides the scientific, social, policy and economic skills required for undertaking a robust, multi-disciplinary assessment

- Maintaining cohesion of the Assessment's outputs by ensuring that members of the Expert Panel and Contributing Authors analyse and present evidence and judgements in coherence with the work of the Assessment as a whole
- Providing technical oversight to the Assessment, and working closely with the Secretariat to ensure that the Assessment is delivered effectively
- Ensuring that the findings of the project are appropriately peer reviewed so that conclusions are robust and presented clearly in a way that is accessible by a range of stakeholders
- Taking decisions on technical aspects of the Assessment, such as data sources to be used, and experts to be consulted
- Agreeing judgements made by the Expert Panel based on the evidence presented, and ensuring those judgements are presented in a transparent and robust fashion
- Working with the Expert Panel and Secretariat to agree scenarios for the provision of ecosystem services in future, based on the most reliable available information on trends and pressures on ecosystems
- Ensuring that there are clear, agreed outputs from Expert Panel working meetings that can be fed into the Assessment process
- Leading on stakeholder engagement throughout the project, with support and facilitation from the Secretariat
- Presenting agreed, peer reviewed findings of the project to the stakeholder community and a wider public audience
- Writing, with the Expert Panel, the Executive Summaries for the Assessment reports and agreeing these with the Client Group
-

National Ecosystem Assessment:

Terms of Reference for the Expert Panel

1. Background

The National Ecosystem Assessment is a two year project covering the terrestrial, freshwater and marine ecosystems of the UK, which will:



- give us a clear view of the current and possible future state of the natural environment and the provision of ecosystem services, mainly by synthesising and coordinating existing evidence, exploring future scenarios and possible policy responses
- create a compelling and coherent narrative on the state and value of the natural environment and ecosystem services, to help raise awareness of their importance to human well-being and future economic prosperity
- be achieved through an inclusive process that encourages different stakeholders and communities of interest to interact and share learning, and in particular to foster better inter-disciplinary cooperation between natural and social scientists.

Following the methodology adopted by the global Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA), this National Ecosystem Assessment will be conducted in two phases. Phase I, which is intended to report by [the end of 2009], will focus on the current state of our ecosystems and the services they provide to the economy and society. Phase II, due to report in [Autumn 2010], will develop possible future scenarios by analysing trends and pressures, and identify possible policy responses.

The Assessment is expected to rely heavily on the Expert Panel examining and building on existing data sets to generate insights, and interacting with stakeholders (data users and providers, including national policy customers) to provide scientifically credible answers to policy-relevant questions .

2. Role of the Expert Panel

The Expert Panel will assist the Co-chairs and the Secretariat in the collation and analysis of the wide range of scientific, economic, and social data required to produce an ecosystem assessment on a national scale.

The Expert Panel will also help to ensure the quality of the evidence used in the National Ecosystem Assessment and its appropriateness to provide scientifically credible answers to policy-relevant questions. It will critically review the evidence to present a reasoned assessment of the state of the natural environment, the provision of ecosystem services and to explore future scenarios and possible responses.

It will take into consideration the economic, ethical and social aspects of issues as well as the scientific and technological aspects. In reaching its conclusions, the Expert Panel will seek to make a transparent, balanced assessment, taking account of the wider implications for society of any proposed responses to future scenarios.

To achieve this it will:

- Work in close collaboration with and provide expert advice to the Co-Chairs and Secretariat on scientific, economic and social aspects of ecosystems and the services and benefits they provide to society.
- Work with stakeholders and other experts to assemble, synthesise and review relevant evidence at a national scale on ecosystems and ecosystem services.
- Provide strategic advice to the Co-Chairs and Secretariat on evidence gaps and options for commissioning additional evidence and analysis to address these gaps when necessary.
- Provide independent review of the evidence gathered and reports written
- Agree scenarios for the provision of ecosystem services in future, based on the most reliable available information on trends and pressures on ecosystems.
- Critically assess options for responding to future scenarios based on possible changes to ecosystems in future.
- Assist the Co-Chairs in writing the executive summaries to reports produced as part of the assessment.

3. Expert Panel sub-groups



As the Assessment progresses, we envisage that a number of Expert Panel sub-groups will be established in relation to assessment themes that emerge/issues that arise. Members of the Expert Panel will be invited to participate in these sub-groups in accordance with the expertise required.

4. Expert Panel meetings

The Expert Panel and sub groups of the Panel will meet at key stages throughout the project (up to six times per year, and possibly separate meetings for sub-group members). This will include progress meetings with the Co-Chairs and Secretariat. Members will be reimbursed relative to the requirements placed on them.