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EARTHWATCH INSTITUTE

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CONTACTS AND RESOURCES

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British Standards Institute
Tel: +44 (0)20 8996 9000 www.bsi-global.com

Business in the Environment
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Earthwatch (Europe)
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English Nature
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Environment Agency
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Global Reporting Initiative
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International Network for Environmental Management (INEM)
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Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)
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Landmark Information Group
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Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA)
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International Network for Environmental Management
www.inem.org

National Biodiversity Network
Tel: +44 (0)1636 670090 www.nbn.org.uk

ReCORD
Tel: +44 (0)1244 383749 www.consult-eco.ndirect.co.uk/lrc/contacts.htm

Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
Tel: +44 (0)1786 457700 www.sepa.org.uk

UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre
Tel: +44 (0)1223 277314 www.unep-wcmc.org

UK Biodiversity Action Plan
UK and Local BAP contacts: www.ukbap.org.uk/contacts.htm
UK BAP web site: www.ukbap.org.uk

Wildlife Trusts Network
Tel: +44 (0)870 036771 www.wildlifetrusts.org

Earthwatch (Europe) hosts a Business & Biodiversity Resource Centre (BBRC), supported by DEFRA and Innogy. The BBRC aims to raise awareness of biodiversity and provide information and practical advice for companies to engage with biodiversity issues. For more information, additional copies of this leaflet or to send us details of your company's biodiversity work contact:

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EARTHWATCH

Business & Biodiversity

Site Biodiversity Action Plans

A Guide to managing biodiversity on your site

DEVELOPING A SITE BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

Many businesses are aware of the benefits of managing their environmental impacts and are seeking ways to reduce pollution, waste and energy consumption. A growing number of companies are also beginning to manage their impacts on biodiversity.

In the UK, government and conservation bodies are encouraging companies which own or manage land to contribute to the conservation of biodiversity, or wildlife, through developing management plans for their landholdings called site Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs).

This leaflet provides information, examples and contacts to help you to develop BAPs for your company sites. We suggest a framework which could fit into your existing Environmental Management System (EMS) or provide a basis for developing an autonomous system for managing biodiversity.

No matter how big or small your site, this leaflet should help your company make a positive contribution to biodiversity conservation which can in turn benefit your business.

GETTING STARTED

Internal support of the site BAP is essential if the process is to succeed. By identifying and communicating the business case for action you are more likely to gain the high-level endorsement which will encourage support and commitment from your colleagues. More information on the reasons why companies get involved with biodiversity is available through Earthwatch's *Business & Biodiversity* publications as well as by visiting the web site *www.businessandbiodiversity.org*.

Companies with a number of sites may wish to prioritise which of these need site BAPs first. Some companies have ranked the biodiversity importance of their sites and then followed a phased approach to developing and implementing site BAPs.

Sites which do not have specific biodiversity value can still be managed and developed in a way that will enhance their value for biodiversity as part of the wider landscape.

Even if your company does not have significant land holdings, you can examine the impacts that your company's activities have on surrounding areas. The Business & Biodiversity Resource Centre (BBRC) provides information on a number of different ways to make a positive contribution to biodiversity, such as supporting conservation initiatives or managing the impacts of your supply chain.

What is Biodiversity?

Biodiversity means the variety of life, from mammals and birds to bacteria, plants and fungi. It provides natural products and services which humans have always been able to take for granted, such as the provision of fresh water, fertile soils, clean air and stable weather conditions.

Widespread and rapid biodiversity loss is one of the most pressing issues affecting our planet, reducing the quality of human life and the potential for sustainable development and affecting the environment in which businesses operate.

The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) provides a framework for biodiversity action in this country. Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs) have been developed across the UK to translate national targets and help to deliver the UK BAP at a local level.

GETTING GOING

If your company owns or manages land, the first step in developing a site BAP is to find out what is on the site. An initial survey, carried out by an experienced ecologist will help to determine the ecological status of your site.

Involving People

Involving a range of staff and stakeholders provides important resources for developing and implementing a site BAP. It can also help you to build trust and support to carry out and monitor the plan. A site BAP can generate numerous positive benefits such as good community relations and improved staff morale.

Working together with other departments, such as public relations or human resources, you may be able to draw out the full benefits of having a site BAP and be better able to communicate these to upper management.

A selection of organisations which can help you with your site BAP are listed on the back of this leaflet. Information about key organisations involved in the LBAP process is available from the UK BAP web site.

Setting your targets

In order for your site BAP to be achievable, it needs to be realistic. Identify costs and resources early on, thinking of ways in which you can draw on additional resources within the company and in the surrounding community.

Your site BAP will have more chance of success if the process is integrated into existing management systems and procedures.

Communicating

A site BAP can provide your company with an opportunity to publicise its contribution to biodiversity and the local community. Communicating successes can help build additional support for your initiative and may provide incentives for more people to join in the process of conserving biodiversity.

You can let people know about your work via community newsletters, your company's web site or by posting news about your site BAP on the web site *www.businessandbiodiversity.org*.

A simple framework of actions outlined overleaf includes suggestions and examples of how some companies are developing and implementing their site BAPs. This should help your company to make a positive contribution to biodiversity.

CASE STUDY:

Innogy's system for prioritising sites

Innogy, a company with a number of power station sites in the UK, has developed a system which allows it to focus its resources on those sites with the best biodiversity value. The company began by assessing the biodiversity resources on its sites in the context of both the UK BAP and Local BAPS (LBAPs).

A biodiversity scoring system was developed which enabled the sites to be ranked according to their biodiversity value. Assessment criteria included, inter alia, the presence on site of species or habitats included in the national UK BAP or LBAP, areas of designated conservation status and the occurrence of protected species. The conservation status of land surrounding the site was also considered, as was the potential to enhance the biodiversity value within the site boundary.

These criteria were scored and weighted from an ecological and conservation perspective to arrive at an overall biodiversity score for each site. Aberthaw power station near Barry, south Wales and Fawley power station near Southampton both of which contain Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), scored highly and have full site BAPs.

DEVELOPING A SITE BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

CASE STUDY 1: Severn Trent Water Survey Sites


Middlemarch Environmental

Conducting Phase 1 Habitat Surveys

The Severn Trent Water (STW) Corporate BAP, launched in 1999, was created using the following steps.

1. Field Surveys – collecting survey data for all STW landholdings

2. Identification of UK BAP species and habitats

3. Site classification – maximising use of available resources

4. Production of management plans (briefs are prepared for less valuable sites)

5. Production of a corporate BAP database

6. Monitoring and Re-surveying

Prior to undertaking the field surveys, existing data on BAP species and habitats was collated within the vicinity of STW sites by ecologists from the consultancy Middlemarch Environmental Ltd.

Field surveys were undertaken in the summer months using Phase 1 Habitat Survey methodology. For each site a habitat map and plant species list was produced with additional notes on protected or UK BAP species.

The data collected was assessed against the UK and LBAPs, selecting the most appropriate species and habitats for the STW BAP. The field survey data was then used to classify the STW sites according to their existing or potential biodiversity value. Action plans were drawn up on those sites with higher biodiversity value. Simpler management briefs and procedure documents were developed for sites of lower value. A bespoke database was developed allowing easy access to biodiversity data for STW staff.

As part of the monitoring and review process, Middlemarch Environmental Ltd re-survey approximately 10 to 15% of STW's sites annually.

CASE STUDY 2: The Royal Bank of Scotland Group Draw Up a Management Plan


RBS Group plc

Headquarters of RBS Group

The Royal Bank of Scotland Group is constructing its World Headquarters building at Gogarburn, a 78 acre site on the outskirts of Edinburgh. An ecological study was carried out in conjunction with the site Environmental Impact Assessment, during which 19 different habitats and species noted on the Edinburgh LBAP were recorded. The protection and enhancement of these species and habitats is the key objective in the management of the site. Specific actions in the plan include:

– improving the natural character of woodlands;

– reintroducing native plant species;

– planting new woodland;

– creating habitats for target species (e.g. wildflower meadow, invertebrate habitat);

– providing a kingfisher nesting bank, bat boxes, bird boxes and a wildlife ledge to allow easy passage of otters, badgers and other mammals through a culvert under the busy A8; and

– controlling invasive plant species such as Giant Hogweed and Himalyan Balsalm.

The management plan will be reviewed annually, and progress recorded against targets set for each project.

CASE STUDY 3: GSK's Staff Help with Habitat Surveys

GlaxoSmithKline's site at Ulverston is located at the edge of the Lake District National Park, an area of outstanding natural beauty in the UK. The company developed a site BAP in order to contribute positively to the LBAP, involve employees and the local community and communicate positive aspects of the company's presence in the area. The company carried out an initial habitat survey in 1998 and repeated the survey in 2002 with the Cumbria Wildlife Trust. Information, gathered over a six-month period on each occasion, was used first to produce and then to revise the company's site BAP.

Staff were key to gathering information about biodiversity on the site. Employees and some retired staff completed record cards on species and then entered their work into a database during their lunch hours. During 2002, almost 40 members of staff contributed 8600 records and found over 500 species.

CASE STUDY 4: Monitoring Biodiversity at Center Parcs

At Center Parcs, biodiversity monitoring activities are included in the action plan and carried out by a team which includes internal staff, ecological consultants and volunteer natural historians. Monitoring is carried out annually with volunteers and staff contributing to around 70% of the work, using simple record sheets to record data.

A Center Parcs ecologist co-ordinates the monitoring programme, collates and assesses the resulting information and modifies the action plan as appropriate. He also compiles a formal report which is assessed by the external auditors as part of the company's ISO 14001 certified EMS.

Center Parcs' experience with the linnet *(Carduelis cannabina)*, a UK BAP priority species, is an excellent example of how a site BAP can work. The BAP for Center Parcs' Sherwood Forest site had set a target to retain a minimum of 15 breeding pairs of linnet on the site. With the help of local volunteers from the Birklands Ringing Group, the company spotted when the breeding population dropped below the minimum target. Together with the Birklands Ringing Group, Center Parcs developed a list of habitat management actions to attempt to reverse the decline. As a result, the company changed the scrub habitat management on the site. Today the population is again increasing, bucking the national trend of a continuous decline.

CASE STUDY 5: Site BAP Reviewed at RMC

In the Blackwater Valley of southern Berkshire, RMC have created a series of nature conservation lakes following gravel extraction. A local group of conservation volunteers, the Moor Green Lakes Group (MGLG), carries out day to day management and monitoring of the site under the direction of a steering group chaired by RMC.


N.Morrin

RMC Eversley

This steering group meets twice a year to review progress and agree budgets. The MGLG has recently produced its second Management Plan for the site since its formation some ten years ago. The plan sets out the priorities and goals for the next five years, but is flexible enough to allow for regular reviews and updates.

For example, members of the MGLG noted that an island in the middle of the lake had attracted the interest of some mink and recommended erection of specialised fencing on the island to protect nesting birds, as well as some experimental trapping of the mink. This was agreed at the next management meeting, additional resources were allocated and the original Management Plan was updated accordingly.

AIMS	ACTIONS	RESOURCES*
1. CONDUCTING ECOLOGICAL SITE SURVEYS		
Identify what habitats and species of plants, animals, insects and birds you have on your site. ***Identify statutory designations, UK BAP species and priority habitats.***	**a. Find Expertise** Most companies will need to find specialist expertise to carry out an ecological survey. **b. Gather Data** One commonly accepted method of gathering ecological data is the Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey which provides a snap-shot of species present on a site. Timing of the survey is important. It is often better to gather data in the summer, when more species can be identified. The presence of species will vary according to a number of factors, such as seasonality. **c. Prioritise** Once an inventory is established, the next step is to identify which habitats and species need special management, taking into account national and local priorities within the UK BAP as well as LBAPs. Some sites will include areas which have been designated protected or of special importance for conservation, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protection Areas (SPAs). Other sites will contain priority UK or LBAP species or habitats.	Consultants can be found through the ENDS directory. Other useful contacts include Wildlife Trusts and local biodiversity groups. Information on conducting site surveys as well as legal designation of sites is available from the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) publications department. Where available, use existing documentation, such as company records (for instance Environmental Impact Assessments), Landmark data, data held by statutory bodies (such as English Nature, the Environment Agency, The Scottish Environment Protection Agency) or the UK BAP web site. The UK web site provides information about and links to local biodiversity practitioners as well as Biodiversity, Habitat and Species Action Plans across the UK.
2. PREPARING THE ACTION PLAN		
Identify the objectives of the site BAP. ***Set out the actions to achieve these objectives.*** ***Set targets against which to monitor your progress.***	**a. Specify aims and objectives** Having identified the biodiversity present on your site, appropriate biodiversity objectives can be established, taking into account: – legal obligations, – LBAPs, – other values for the site including its landscape, value and amenity use, – security and access consideration, – available resources. **b. Identify actions and timings** These will involve amendments to existing management activities (such a grass cutting, hedge trimming and planting) as well as new activities to benefit biodiversity. Think about how actions can be built into existing systems and regimes. **c. Set targets and deadlines** Setting realistic targets for the implementation of your BAP is key to its success. These targets will need to take into consideration not only the ecological priorities, but resources and staff available as well as the timing of related management activities, such as those set out in your environmental management systems (EMS). **d. Allocate responsibilities and assign resources** The site BAP may include activities which can be carried out by different employees as well as external organisations. For example, staff already working in landscaping may have biodiversity-related objectives written into their job targets. **e. Identify indicators** Appropriate indicators will help you set targets, measure progress and report on the results of your efforts. The indicators you choose should be both easily measurable and relate to the objectives of the BAP. You may want to include two types of indicators: – related to the process (e.g. actions implemented within a certain time period), – related to biodiversity objectives (e.g. population size of priority species on site; area of priority habitat of good quality).	In drawing up the action plan, targets and indicators, a number of contacts can be drawn upon including local biodiversity practitioners, consultants and Wildlife Trusts as well as any in-house expertise. Local BAP practitioners will often know about other relevant organisations and potential partners to consult in drawing up and prioritising your site BAP actions. When working with external organisations, many companies find that agreeing on responsibilities as well as protocol, such as access or procedures, helps to manage expectations and reduce chances of misunderstandings. It may be helpful to involve other parts of the company in defining responsibilities and assigning resources. For instance, Human Resources and Communications departments may be able to contribute by reviewing job specifications or running awareness-raising campaigns. A BAP is an ongoing process and involves many different actors. Some companies have designated a biodiversity 'champion' who leads on developing and implementing the site BAP. A number of indicators of company biodiversity performance are suggested by the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and the Business in the Environment (BiE) Index. Additionally, some industry bodies are developing sector specific indicators and benchmarks.
3. IMPLEMENTING		
Carry out the site BAP in accordance with defined objectives and priorities	**a. Integrate the site BAP into your EMS** If your company has an existing EMS, you may find that the best way to achieve the objectives set out in the site BAP is by integrating this process into your EMS. You can do this in stages. **b. Carry out actions** A phased approach may be adopted, starting with the most important species or habitats and acting on additional ones in subsequent years.	Information about EMS is available from organisations such as the British Standards Institute (BSI), Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) and the International Network for Environmental Management (INEM). Trade associations and industry bodies can also provide specialist advice for each sector. For additional guidance contact Earthwatch.
4. MONITORING		
Track implementation of the action plan. ***Make adjustments to the plan to reflect changes to biodiversity on site.***	**a. Monitor against indicators** A simple process should be in place to record what actions have been carried out and when. The status of biodiversity, such as fluctuations in biodiversity, on the site should be maintained according to methods agreed with ecologists. **b. Record new / additional data** Species and habitats vary naturally over time. Monitoring and re-surveying will result in new information (e.g. the presence of species missed during the initial survey). New information should be incorporated into the site BAP. **c. Review performance against targets** Use agreed indicators to assess how successfully the BAP has been carried out and how biodiversity has changed on a site. If targets are not met, identify why this has happened and if necessary, amend the action plan.	Some companies have enlisted enthusiastic staff in the monitoring process, developing simple recording sheets for species. New data should be checked with experts for identification and recorded in the site BAP as well as local and national biodiversity recording systems such as ReCORD or through links on the National Biodiversity Network (NBN).
5. REVIEWING AND REPORTING		
Review the site BAP to reflect changes in the status and presence of biodiversity and feasibility of the action plan. ***Compile and communicate results and future plans.***	**a. Incorporate new data into original site survey** Changes to the management plan feed back into stage 2 of the site BAP process. **b. Coordinate review with UK and LBAPs** UK and LBAP priorities and objectives may be updated. Check your site BAP still fits in with these. **c. Report** Keeping the participants and stakeholders of your site BAP informed helps to gain continued support from within as well as outside the company. **Increasingly, companies are expected to report on their impact and activities related to biodiversity, so you may also need to provide information to your head office about your targets and performance on site.**	Local Biodiversity, Habitat and Species Action Plans updates are available on the UK BAP web page as well as from local biodiversity practitioners. The NBN web site provides links to biodiversity and action planning record centres. Many companies talk to their stakeholders, such as local and national non-government organisations or investors, to gain an understanding of what and how to report. You may wish to publish a biodiversity report or to include a section on biodiversity in your existing environmental performance review.

* See overleaf for contact information of the organisations mentioned in this table, or visit www.businessandbiodiversity.org