

SUMMARY OF THE MINUTES OF THE 9TH LWEC PARTNERS' BOARD MEETING

26TH MAY 2011, CHARLES DARWIN HOUSE, LONDON

Item 1: Welcome and actions from last meeting

1.1 The Chair welcomed attendees and there was a round table of introductions. Apologies were received from Andree Carter, UKCDS.

1.2 The Chair ran through the actions from the last meeting. Partners had no comments apart from requesting an update on progress with revising the accreditation process, which was then covered under Item 2.

Item 2: Achievements and impacts

2.1 This paper focused on the achievements of LWEC over the last five months. The launch of the new website and the progress of the framework development for each of the Challenges were highlighted. The flooding and coastal erosion research strategy is progressing but its implementation has involved some complex negotiations. The redrafting of the accreditation documentation was almost complete and a final version will be circulated shortly. The work the Directorate had been doing (in response to requests from Partners) to push forward the tree health agenda was discussed. Andrew concluded that in the next five months he sees the need for LWEC to reach out to civil society and third sector groups in particular. He thanked Partners who had contributed financially to the Planet under Pressure (PuP) event (2012) and urged other Partners to consider doing so. This will be a high profile event and a once in a generation opportunity to showcase UK research.

2.2 Partners requested more detail on the programme for the PuP event. Andrew reassured them that a draft programme should be available within the next few weeks. More information will be made available on the LWEC web site.

2.3 Partners queried whether LWEC was also focusing on ministerial meetings with Departments other than BIS. Caroline Spelman is coming to the NEA launch, there had been good interaction with Scottish ministers to date and involvement with DECC ministers was also planned. It was highlighted that the new Welsh environment minister (John Griffiths) is particularly keen on the importance of valuation of the environment. Partners emphasised that ministerial engagement is positive but only if it leads to impact.

2.4 Partners requested more detail on how co-design was going to be ensured via the improved accreditation process. Andrew emphasised that co-design did not just mean co-funding, it could relate to how LWEC influences changes in strategy level documents for example, and that for existing activities co-production and co-delivery would be more of a focus. Also, the addition of impact reports within the Research Council funding process demonstrated an increased focus on partnership and impact. He added that the Challenge Steering Groups would be key methods of bringing together activities and driving change more strongly. Partners recommended that greater transparency was needed on what constitutes an 'LWEC activity'; they queried why the table of accredited activities does not cover all of the activity the Research Councils deem as 'LWEC'. They felt that it was essential to be certain that all activities irrefutably meet the original principles of an 'LWEC activity', and that being part of LWEC clearly and demonstrably adds value to every activity. The Chair concluded that Andrew Watkinson and Dan Osborn should focus on addressing the Partners' queries.

2.5 Partners emphasised that LWEC's aim was not just for policy to be better informed by research, but also for research to be better informed by policy. It was important for there to be a constant review of policy needs within LWEC, for example the hydro nation and urban agenda are currently of particular importance in Scotland. Andrew agreed that this was important, especially considering how much the UK political landscape had changed since LWEC began to the current focus on localism and devolution.

2.6 Partners warned that it was critical to focus on actual impact – they questioned whether a lot of the things claimed as 'LWEC achievements' in this paper would actually have happened anyway without LWEC involvement.

Action 1: Andrew Watkinson to circulate final versions of proforma and guidelines to PSU

Action 2: Dan Osborn and Andrew Watkinson to look into how all relevant Research Council programmes can be brought in to LWEC, and how to ensure all accredited activities meet LWEC principles and gain added value from being part of LWEC

Item 3: Business Advisory Board report

3.1 Colin Drummond reported strong support from the BAB towards LWEC as a route for focussing, coordinating and ensuring greater value for research investment. The BAB members were pleased to see that their recommendation to the Government regarding planning had been acted upon, that LWEC had taken on board their comments on the resource agenda, and that their input to the Green Economy Roadmap (which they support) had been well received. The BAB is keen for evaluation of the level of business engagement within each accredited activity to take place. Colin thanked the Partners for their participation at the last BAB dinner and encouraged them to come forward with any items they would like to bring to the BAB for discussion, to ensure that they can fulfil their advisory function.

3.2 Partners welcomed the achievements of the BAB, adding that work was needed to improve ministerial understanding of the importance of evidence, particularly with regard to the issue of decreasing resources. Partners raised the efforts in Scotland to create 'industry clusters' around particular topics (e.g. built environment; forestry), which are then the focus for embedding research. They suggested this approach could be of interest to LWEC.

3.3 Partners encouraged that where topics covered by the BAB overlapped with the remit of other cross-council programmes (e.g. Global Food Security) the relevant programmes should be fully engaged and invited to the relevant meeting. They also agreed with BAB that the TSB Knowledge Transfer Partnerships and Knowledge Transfer Networks were important for detailed business engagement.

Item 4: Public Engagement Strategic Advisory Group report

4.1 Miranda Kavanagh explained that there had been two meetings of the PE SAG since she took over as Chair, but the SAG are still unclear as to their exact purpose and remit for LWEC; they feel they have had limited impact and traction within LWEC to date. She highlighted that all of the Partners perform PE to a certain extent, but she feels there is more that the SAG can do to advance LWEC's agenda, especially through working with the Challenge Steering Groups. Miranda added that she feels there is still debate among the Partners over whether LWEC as a whole should perform PE,

or whether this should take place at an individual accredited activity level only. She emphasised that this needs deciding, and proposed a pilot study be conducted to assess PE within LWEC.

4.2 Partners expressed differing views on this item. Some encouraged the development of LWEC as a ‘beacon’ of PE, especially if in the current political climate the emphasis is on local decision makers, who are far ‘closer’ to the general public than central Government. The Partners were broadly supportive of a targeted approach working closely with each of the Challenge Steering Groups.

4.3 Miranda asked the Board whether she should come back with some options. It was agreed that the need for PE activity should be considered by the Challenge Steering Groups when developing implementation plans to deliver specific evidence needs, with the SAG providing advice as required.

Action 3: Directorate and Miranda Kavanagh to follow up on Public Engagement discussion and report to the Board at the next meeting

Item 5: Strategy and scorecard

5.1 Mary Barkham explained that this draft of the LWEC strategy was the result of several rounds of re-drafting and will be a rolling document that will work alongside the scorecard. She encouraged Partners to submit any detailed comments to her electronically; she was more after the Board’s opinion of whether the ‘concept’ of LWEC had been captured sufficiently. Mary had received some feedback already that the business part of the document was too strong, but she proposed that, instead of lessening this section, the society and policy messages should be strengthened equally. Mary suggested that final sign-off of the document should be delegated to the Delivery Group.

5.2 The Partners strongly welcomed the strategy document (and the strategic goal) as a vast improvement on the previous attempts. Specific suggestions to improve the document were:

- Include more reference to delivery e.g. within the flooding area science is critical to deliver appropriate defence;
- The core point about decision makers getting tools is lost later in the document;
- It is not immediately clear within the document how we will know if LWEC has succeeded;
- Agree that business/policy/society needs to balance (Defra offered to assist with this);
- There is a lot of focus on the impacts of climate change – need to remember there are other types of environmental change;
- The document should not be any longer than its current 20 pages; ideally it should be shorter. The language is a bit wordy and passive in places, which could be trimmed down;
- Need to remember that environmental change can lead to positive as well as negative impacts;
- Need to be sure that, wherever we claim an impact that LWEC will have, we have explained how this is going to be delivered;
- The focus on resources should be included as an outcome;
- The section on ‘Research Challenges and Observations’ needs re-titling; there is much more to this than just observations;
- It is important to remember throughout that LWEC is not trying to deliver, for example, human well-being and poverty alleviation. LWEC’s role is to deliver the research that will enable this to happen;
- Must ensure that the ‘shortening time between generating research and creating impact’ message is clearly included.

5.3 Some Partners suggested that, within the strategy, ‘informing choices’ should be used rather than ‘decision makers’ as this term is too vague, but this view was not shared by the whole Board. Others felt that to lose the reference to ‘decision makers’ would remove a critical link to impact. Mary concluded that she would leave the reference to ‘decision makers’ but would define this better through analysis of who these decision-makers are.

5.4 Mary explained that the aim of the scorecard was to produce focus; to highlight the most important objectives of LWEC and for the Partners’ Board to own and drive these. She asked Partners for their initial thoughts on the draft scorecard provided, and suggested that the discussion on performance indicators could be continued via correspondence then finalised by the Delivery Group.

5.5 Partners supported the concept of a scorecard, but had the following issues with the current draft:

- They queried why the six LWEC challenges were not immediately obvious within the objectives. They felt very strongly that these should be the focal points of the scorecard as they are the core of LWEC’s work;
- 17 objectives was too many;
- More thought was needed over whether the existing objectives are actually measurable in any way – suggested that the first 5 currently are not;
- There should be something in there on knowledge exchange;
- They do not think the ‘Inputs: People & Funding’ objectives are necessary.

5.6 The Chair summarised that the Partners were generally supportive, but wanted to see the document made less complex and with more focus on the six challenges. Mary queried whether the Partners were happy with the concept of Partner ownership of the objectives, and this was agreed; specific owners of the objectives will be identified by correspondence.

Action 4: Directorate to take Partner comments into account in the development of the strategy and scorecard documents, then to take the final copies to the Delivery Group for sign-off

Item 6: Adaptation

6.1 Andrew Watkinson introduced the item and explained that adaptation has been a complicated task to work on, but finally with the work of the Adapting to Climate Change (ACC) programme in Defra it is now coming together well. Rupert Lewis (guest speaker from Defra) then explained that they consider adaptation in terms of economic resilience and risk, rather than as an environmental issue, as this has greater traction in the political and business world. He summarised the role of various departments on the topic: DFID lead on adaptation in developing countries, DECC on climate negotiations internationally and Defra on domestic adaptation issues. Rupert highlighted that their timetable of work included improving the usability of the UKCP09 outputs, then work on the Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA), then on the National Adaptation Programme (NAP). He explained that the CCRA is split into sectors, and the NAP into themes. Within these they have identified the top 15 priorities for research.

6.2 Andrew highlighted to Partners the variety of work that LWEC is already doing on adaptation, all of which links to the NAP themes identified by Rupert’s team. He asked the Partners for feedback on whether this work is meeting their expectations, and what investments they are planning in this area.

6.3 Partners welcomed both of the presentations and agreed that this was a good place for LWEC to focus. They agreed with the focus on economic resilience, sustainability and risk to help give people confidence about what they can/cannot plan for, but noted that people would need to be able to understand what risk language meant. They noted that it would not just be big business but also SME's, for example, who would be interested in improved ability to assess risk.

6.4 Partners pointed out that there were gaps in the predictive capacity of UKCP09 which needed filling. Rupert agreed with this.

6.5 It was noted that the BAB would be keen to work with Partners on heat island effect research in particular.

6.6 Partners discussed their various upcoming investments/research needs in the adaptation area (Annex 1).

6.7 Partners also raised these additional comments with regard to adaptation research:

- Business concerns about flooding from both sea level rise and winter rain – are all the key questions being addressed? Especially relating to the impact on logistics;
- Possible role for ESRC in how decisions on adaptation are incorporated into business planning;
- More knowledge exchange is needed to ensure investment is effective;
- It's likely that every intervention will have multiple benefits.

Action 5: Directorate to feedback table of upcoming adaptation investments/needs to Partners for any further comments and to start to draw together evidence to support the National Adaptation Programme.

Item 7: Climate Change Impact Report Card

7.1 Mary Barkham explained that this linked to the previous item on adaptation and the need to get a wealth of evidence to decision makers in an easily digestible form. The proposal was to develop a report card for terrestrial and freshwater impacts of climate change, eventually for each of the areas in the CCRA but initially with a card for water impacts. Leon Smith (guest speaker from Defra who sits on the report card steering group) added that this tool would be very useful for policy makers in providing clear evidence with academic consensus.

7.2 Partners welcomed the proposal as a useful tool, which would raise LWEC's profile and clearly show impact. They cautioned however that the current format seems very much directed at policy makers, whereas it would not work for a business audience. They asked how much the marine example had been used by business, which Mary thought was very little and agreed to go back to the providers and ask why this was. The Partners encouraged engagement with water suppliers and industry e.g. British Water, and noted that this was a rich area for activity at the current time, so LWEC would need to have unique impact to be noticed.

7.3 The Chair summarised that many of the Partners were supportive of the proposal and asked Partners to contact Mary separately with information on how they can contribute, either in kind or financially, to the proposal.

Action 6: Partners to contact Mary with interest in contributing to the Climate Change Impact Report Card

Item 8: LWEC subscriptions and Directorate costs

8.1 For this item the Director and Directorate staff left the meeting because of the conflict of interest. Prof Alan Thorpe introduced the proposal to consolidate the Directorate in Swindon and make a 20% cost saving. He gave various reasons why the Board should not cut too deeply. He pointed out that if the paper were to be accepted the UEA contract would not be renewed.

8.2 After a wide-ranging discussion, including about the Director's role within the new model, the paper and its actions were accepted. In addition, the Board requested the Deputy Director to arrange a review of the Environmental Research Database, reporting back to the next meeting on costs and functionality. It was noted that Research Councils would address the principle for their funding for LWEC subscriptions outside the meeting.

Action 7: Mary Barkham to arrange a review of the Environmental Research Database and report back to the Board on costs and functionality

Item 9: Any other Partner business

9.1 Partners discussed the possibility of a severe drought within the UK during the coming summer months. Partners were asked to contact Huw Lewis (huw.lewis@metoffice.gov.uk) if they would like a copy of a Met Office paper (prepared for ministers) on this issue. It was noted that NERC are making investment into drought research.

9.2 The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions to the meeting, and reminded Partners that the next meeting would be kindly hosted by the Forestry Commission on Tuesday 22nd November 2011 at their offices at Alice Holt, Surrey.

Action 8: Partners to contact Huw Lewis (Met Office) for copies of the paper prepared on the possibility of severe drought in summer 2011

Summary of Actions arising from 9th LWEC Partners' Board meeting, May 26th 2011

Action Number	Agenda item	Action
1	2	Andrew Watkinson to circulate final versions of proforma and guidelines to PSU
2	2	Dan Osborn and Andrew Watkinson to look into how all relevant Research Council programmes can be brought in to LWEC, and how to ensure all accredited activities meet LWEC principles and gain added value from being part of LWEC
3	4	Directorate and Miranda Kavanagh to follow up on Public Engagement discussion and report to the Board at the next meeting
4	5	Directorate to take Partner comments into account in the development of the strategy and scorecard documents, then to take the final copies to the Delivery Group for sign-off
5	6	Directorate to feedback table of upcoming adaptation investments/needs to Partners for any further comments and to start to draw together evidence to support the National Adaptation Programme
6	7	Partners to contact Mary with interest in contributing to the Climate Change Impact Report Card
7	8	Mary Barkham to arrange a review of the Environmental Research Database and report back to the Board on costs and functionality
8	9	Partners to contact Huw Lewis (Met Office) for copies of the paper prepared on the possibility of severe drought in summer 2011

ANNEX 1: LWEC partner upcoming investment/needs in adaptation research (possible or planned)

Partner	Details of investment/need in adaptation research (possible or planned)
Defra	Adaptation research (embedded in other policy areas) (£2m/yr)
Defra/DECC	Hadley Climate Science (£4.5m/yr)
RCUK	Adaptation (£27m); Climate Science (£50m); Mitigation (£128m)
EPSRC	No new current investment plans this yr. ARCC programme ongoing & Heat Island Effect awards.
TSB	Design for future climate programme (building on Prometheus). Upcoming: Agriculture & Food programme (£17m); Future cities programme.
NERC	Valuation network; BESS; Virtual Observatory; droughts; floods; water scarcity (on the way); possibly soils.
WAG	Health and well-being public survey.
NIEA	Delivery of comms/plans (£2m). Historic/natural heritage.
FC	Forest work: adaptation (£2m + lever); mitigation (£1.2m).
DfT	Low emission vehicles; transport for growth; greening/carbon minimisations (£10's of millions).
DECC/DFID/Defra	International programme – includes land use, emergency, fuel/energy infrastructure.
DH	<u>NEED</u> a better understanding of effects of increased temperature on health on: indoor environment; air pollution; disease rates; elderly/vulnerable; thresholds; new building/reviewing existing building regulations.
DCLG	<u>NEED</u> a systems view of physical infrastructure research to determine where early intervention is needed.
Several	<u>NEED</u> info for long term service planning e.g. existing heritage and landscape; understanding incentives for continued investment.
DFID	Private sector adaptation in developing countries.
EA	Water availability; reporting on adaptation; new role for Gov. Water Framework Directive – water ecology. Flood plain development. Property Resilience.
SG/SEPA	'Hydro nation' linked to E and CT businesses.
EA/SG/SEPA	Sustainable flood management.
NE	Adapting conservation to climate change: assessing vulnerability; testing adaptation; monitoring. Agri-environment schemes. Green Infrastructure.
SG/NE	Land use strategy.
BBSRC	Crops for the future; new animal diseases; new crop diseases.
DFID	Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security programme (CCAFS).
MRC	Increased pollution/temperature; respiratory problems; ecology of infections.
MRC/BBSRC	New zoonoses.
AHRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Impacts of climate change on historic heritage (both in terms of physical objects, buildings etc and historic sites) (through AHRC / EPSRC Science and Heritage Programme and new EU JPI on Cultural Heritage and Global change) and implications for their conservation and management. · Impacts on valued landscapes (e.g. follow-up to landscape and environment programme) and implications for landscape management.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Learning lessons from past adaptation in response to climate and environmental change (not treating it as if adaptation is an entirely new phenomenon) (potential new area of investment).· Improving understanding of the cultural value of the environment (to inform decisions / priorities on adaptation (potential new area of investment but building on existing work).· Creative ways to engage the public in the choices and decisions raised by adaptation to climate change, e.g. through creative and performing arts) (potential new area of investment but building on current work e.g. on narratives / storytelling).
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