

DPLUS116 Falkland Wetlands PMG meeting
Microsoft Teams
07 October 2021

Attendees: Denise Blake (DB) (FIG), Steffi Carter (SC) (SAERI), Chris Evans (CE) (UK CEH), Roger Flower (RF) (Independent & UCL), Julian Thompson (JT) (UCL)

Apologies: Al Baylis (AB) (SAERI), Tara Pelembe (TP) (SAERI), David Stroud (DS) (Independent),

SC caught up with DS immediately after the PMG meeting.

Time: 9.30 – 11am (Falklands) / 13.30 – 15.00 (UK)

Minute taker: Steffi Carter

1. Fieldwork & Project Partner Visits

SC explained to the PMG that the project will need to be wrapped by 31 March 2022. A no-cost extension, which was previously considered, will not be possible because of SAERI's operational planning needs. This means that the fieldwork needs to be completed by Christmas so that SC can focus on the remaining project tasks (discussed under point 2.) between January and March 2022. SC asked project partners for decisions on whether or not they are able to visit the Falklands in the upcoming summer. JT and DS are unable to accommodate a visit, CE hopes to visit in January 2022 and RF would also like to visit but that will depend on personal circumstances, which will be clearer by the end of October.

During the fieldwork, SC plans to visit North Arm, West Falkland and one additional location and intends to incorporate several sites from previous fieldwork, so that change over time can be looked at. RF proposed to look at more diatom samples taken from sites that were visited previously but also from sites, where long-term loggers have been deployed. Selection of field sites will also need to consider intentions for long-term monitoring.

2. Major Project Tasks

2.1 Symposium

The PMG agree that the Symposium will be held during one day, possibly on 31st January, which still needs to be confirmed, and will include a combination of speakers present and speakers virtually participating.

2.2 Indicator selection and monitoring (analyse data, write methodology report on selection process, train FIG and SAERI staff on indicator monitoring)

Long-term monitoring was discussed and will probably only be possible at a total of six sites, 2 on the West and 4 on the East. The project's eDNA work can also feed into monitoring

recommendations. Moderate funding will be required for long-term funding, ideally ring-fenced by the Falkland Islands Government. An application to the environmental studies budget in 2022 will be one option to fund long-term monitoring. Recommendations for long-term monitoring will probably include a scaled approach (minimum, medium, and maximum), which will be based on funding costs required.

The PMG agreed that the indicator monitoring report will be discussed and a rough report will be produced during the next PMG meeting in January 2022, which SC will then be able to finalise after the meeting.

2.3 Write policy paper on recommendations for wetlands action plan

The PMG agree to have another meeting in February 2022, during which the recommendations for a Wetlands Action Plan will be discussed to produce a rough report, which SC will then be able to finalise after the meeting.

DB will be on maternity leave from mid-November onwards, it will be best to include both her maternity cover and Rachel Cooper in the meetings in January and February 2022.

3. Half annual report

SC will complete the half annual report before 31st October and will send it to the PMG for comments but notes that no major input from the PMG will be required.

4. Diatoms report from Roger Flower

RF reports the results of his work on the diatom samples that SC sent him. SC will write up the results and their implications into a small report so that it can be published on the project website and be included in the final report.

5. Other matters

A solution for a contract with UCL will need to be found. SC will email details to JT.