Minutes
Proteus Annual Meeting 2017

Day 1 - 27th June 2017

The David Attenborough Building, Pembroke Street, Cambridge, CB2 3QZ

Proteus Partners met in Cambridge to review the Partnership's key achievements over the course of 2016, and identify new areas of interest for the coming years. Partners received a horizon scan of emerging biodiversity issues, and discussed landscape-level planning and the integration of climate risk to biodiversity management.

Objectives of the day

- To brief Proteus members on key developments in Proteus, strategic priorities and the future work plan and secure member input into them
- To explore the impact of Proteus and determine, with members, how that impact can be enhanced and the membership of Proteus broadened
- To highlight emerging issues and trends in biodiversity conservation, science and policy of strategic relevance to Proteus members
- To secure member input into UNEP-WCMC's engagement with the extractive sector on priority areas for future work development

Presentations

Introduction and updates on Proteus and IBAT
▪ Proteus update: 2016 Highlights, Impact Survey results and Financial Report – Katie Leach and Matt Jones (Business and Biodiversity Programme, UNEP-WCMC) [download]
▪ The Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool: Future plans and member feedback – Matt Jones (Business and Biodiversity Programme, UNEP-WCMC) [download]
Horizon scanning – emerging issues and new developments
▪ Policy developments and the private sector to road to 2018 – Jerry Harrison (Head of Programme, Conventions and Policy support, UNEP-WCMC) [download]
▪ UN Environment – a new vision for engagement with the extractive sector – Oli Brown (Senior Programme Officer, Disasters and Conflict branch, UN Environment) [download]
▪ Protected areas – new ambitions for area-based conservation – Naomi Kingston (Head of Programme, Protected Areas, UNEP-WCMC) [download]
Cross sectoral collaboration in complex land and seascapes
▪ Strategic environmental assessment – integrating biodiversity (Svein Grotli Skogen, Oil for Development Programme, Norway) [download]
▪ Delivering environmental knowledge and management outcomes through private/public sector partnerships (Luke Smith, Chief Environment Scientist, Woodside) [download]
▪ Managing complex issues – The challenges of SEAs and the O&G activities in Mauritania (Mark Johnston, Group Ecologist Environment, Social Responsibility & HSSE, BP Plc) [download]
Managing biodiversity impacts in a changing climate
▪ Managing biodiversity impacts in a changing climate (Dr Wendy Foden, Chair IUCN Species Survival Commission Climate Change Specialist Group) [download]
▪ Ocean sprawl - planning marine infrastructure to deliver biodiversity benefits in a changing climate (Steve Fletcher, Head of Programme, Marine, UNEP-WCMC) [download]

Supporting materials

- Agenda [download] and participants list for day 1 [download]
- Proteus Annual Report 2016 [download] and Proteus Impact Survey 2017 [download]
- Proteus Technical Briefing Note: Species' responses to climate change [download]

Take away messages

- Proteus delivered significant updates to protected areas data, to marine and coastal data, and to support the continued development of data in the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool. Partner funding also facilitated major leverage funding from other sources.
- Energy, mining and infrastructure will be the subject of policy discussions and decisions at the global level in the run up to the meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity in December 2018. The timeframes for engagement are short, and UNEP-WCMC is working with the Secretariat of the Convention to find ways for industry to input.
- Cross-sectoral collaboration at the strategic and landscape level can be promoted by individual companies, but the impact is likely to be greater with broader industry uptake. Public-private partnerships can play an important role around data sharing. UNEP-WCMC will explore this area further with Proteus partners.
- The impact of climate change on species and the resulting effectiveness of mitigation action aimed at conserving biodiversity is an area of increasing importance for companies. While the internal business case is still difficult to build, this latent issue is likely to increase in prominence over coming years.
- Proteus continues to deliver value to companies. The focus on new data and data quality will remain a vital focus within the Partnership going into 2018. Climate change and natural capital were identified as increasing priorities for Proteus partners as part of the 2017 Impact survey. Additional priorities for improvement identified by Partners during the meeting include improvement of data quality in developing countries and improved site-level information.

A summary of feedback from workshop participants is provided in Annex 1.

Introduction and updates on Proteus and IBAT

We were pleased to report on key highlights completed by the Proteus partnership in 2016[1]:

- **Improving protected areas data** – A total of 90 countries' records were updated in the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA), with 22,000 new sites and 87% of sites updated or verified
- **Taking the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool (IBAT) forward** - Three core datasets (Protected Areas, Key Biodiversity Areas, and Red List Species) were updated in IBAT. Additionally, IBAT partners reached out to IBAT subscribers to develop a new business plan. This is now in its final stages and has gone out for external consultation
- **New marine and coastal data** - New data on saltmarshes, seagrasses and cold-water corals were made available to Proteus Partners through the Ocean Data Viewer
- **Screening for Critical Habitat** - The marine Critical Habitat screening layer has been updated
- **New biodiversity resources** – The collection of resources were available on the Proteus website includes new Technical Briefing Notes (e.g. Remote sensing) and webinars on emerging issues (e.g. Sustainable Development Goals)
- **Training and Technical support** – Several Partners drew on training, technical support and technical assistance available to them through the Partnership. Overall, UNEP-WCMC delivered five training sessions, four technical assistance projects and responded to over 80 queries in 2016
- **Enhanced engagement on business & biodiversity issues** - Increased engagement through major events which guide the global biodiversity agenda: The IUCN World Conservation Congress and the Convention on Biological Diversity's Conference of the Parties in Cancun.

Last year also saw the completion of the first Proteus impact survey to explore the utilisation of Proteus data in policy decisions. The exercise will be undertaken annually to track the impact of the Partnership over time. The 2017 impact survey showed that technical data users are more familiar with the Proteus partnership in 2016/2017 than in 2015/2016. Climate change and natural capital are increasing priorities for Proteus partners in 2017[2].

The total 2016 income from Proteus partners was GBP 715,098 and total expenditure was GBP 716,207. The total 2016 income from Proteus partners was used to leverage funds at a ratio of £1:1.1 from other funders towards common goals.

Questions & Answers

- On the release of the Global Critical Habitat screening layer? A Technical Briefing Note will be circulated simultaneously to the release of the layer, providing guidance on the use of the layer. The layer will additionally include a "drill-down" option for each cell, specifying which features triggered a likely or potential Critical Habitat status.
- On the ongoing redevelopment of IBAT: A market review was completed as part of this process, scoping options for increasing the subscriber base. IBAT partner organisations regularly get requests for data from new users (e.g. agricultural companies), but work will be done to actively promote the use of IBAT more widely. The revised IBAT will also provide better possibilities for consultants to access the data, through options to use individual tiles of data.

[1] Download 2016 Annual Report: http://www.proteuspartners.org/resources/proteus-2016-update-report.pdf

[2] Download 2017 Impact Survey report: http://www.proteuspartners.org/resources/proteus-2016-impact-survey.pdf

Horizon scanning – emerging issues and new developments

International biodiversity policy is currently focussed on two horizons: 2020 and the end of the International Decade on Biodiversity and progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity targets, and 2030 which is the timeline for the Global Goals. This session explored some of the key milestones and issues.

The 14th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 14) will be hosted by Egypt in 2018, a focus for businesses will be on mainstreaming biodiversity in energy, mining and infrastructure. UNEP-WCMC, together with UN Environment colleagues and the Secretariat of CBD are exploring several opportunities for Partners to provide input in the lead up to the meeting by commenting on documents. Meetings occurring before the CBP COP typically assemble 500-600 people, with each government brining several participants.

UN Environment has been working on extractive issues for many years, and supports positive change in extractive governance and business practices. Core areas of focus include: business practices and green finance, natural resource governance, disasters preparedness and conflict prevention (for example, MAP-X) and reducing pollution.

Area-based measures for conservation includes both protected areas and Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs, or "Conserved areas"). While a good understanding exists for the global network of protected areas, the global extent of conserved areas is lesser known. Biodiversity management in these areas may significantly contribute to global conservation efforts. Mechanisms such as the IUCN Green List of protected areas may lead to increased recognition of conserved areas. Examples of conserved areas include privately protected areas, restoration areas and Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs).

Partner updates

Update on the Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) guidelines by Giulia Carbone (IUCN). Following the public consultation, principles and recommendations were removed and the focus will be on guidelines for operations that have an impact on KBAs.

Updated on biodiversity management approach by Rio Tinto. Rio Tinto no longer has a commitment on Net Positive Impact (NPI). This does not mean that Rio Tinto has relaxed its approach to biodiversity. The company is drafting a biodiversity standard as part of its broad suite of standards on HSE.

Questions & Answers

- On the value of COP14 for Proteus: The ideal outcome for COP14 would be cross-sectoral collaborations, working with governments to build a level playing field, a focus on processes and principles, and a risk-based approach would be key outcomes from COP 14. However, challenges include the complex nature of government structures, repetition in dialogues and lobbying if work is across multiple countries.
- On the definition of "Mainstreaming": In preparation of CBP COP14, the CBD secretariat are trying to work through a definition of "mainstreaming" and would like to engage with the private sector to work out what is useful. Mainstreaming for agriculture would for instance include policies for sustainable agriculture. UNEP-WCMC have strong expertise in supporting the mainstreaming of biodiversity and development in national plans (e.g. National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans – NBSAPs), which will be drawn on to support this process.
- On data availability for "Conserved areas": Prior to developing a spatial data layer for these areas, the definition of "Other Effective Conservation Measures" needs to be clarified. The text will go into CBD decisions, who will work with countries in collaboration with UNEP-WCMC to recognise and report on these areas.
- On data availability for Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCA): The ICCA database is currently table-based. A subset of sites have spatial data. If these sites meet the IUCN definition of a protected area, they have been included in the WDPA and can be queried through the "governance type" field. UNEP-WCMC have an ongoing project with UN Development (UNDP) to improve ICCA data.

Cross sectoral collaboration in complex land and seascapes

Landscape level planning that incorporates multiple social and environmental interests is widely understood to benefit decision-making for sustainable development. This process requires participation of multiple actors across multiple sectors. This session explored potential approaches for enhancing cross-sectoral collaboration.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEAs) are regarded as key tool for cross-sector collaboration by integrating environmental, social and economic considerations in government planning. The Oil for Development programme supports developing countries in the preparation of SEAs, and provided an overview of the integration of biodiversity within the process. SEAs are often challenged by the allocation of insufficient resources (financial, staff, time) during the introductory stages. Companies and NGOs may face project delays if their demand for national resources exceeds national capacity.

BP has been enhancing its internal understanding of the value of SEAs for individual projects, and illustrated their insights in the context of Mauritania. A key consideration is to align the SEA and project delivery time line, as SEAs may create future regulatory restrictions.

Woodside highlighted the value of public-private sector Partnerships for enhanced environmental knowledge and management outcomes. Collaborations with government-funded and non-government organisations can be an effective way to collect knowledge and share understanding within and across sectors. Increases in local capacity may lead to significant reputation benefits. International conservation organisations often have large networks, which enable access to local information even in countries where few local organisations are established.

Break-out group feedback

How effective is the SEA process in managing cumulative/shared impact and what is the role of the private sector in supporting their implementation? SEAs are a great way for companies to pool resources on biodiversity baselines and a good opportunity to engage with local people. They can however be expensive, especially in offshore environments, and need to take account of all business activities happening in the area. Capable people are needed to perform assessments, with appropriate timescales and resourcing. The major role of the private sector is to provide funds for the work and a collaborative platform for the baseline data.

How can governments be engaged to support efforts to deliver international best practice?
Cross-sectoral industry collaboration exists at the global level (e.g. CSBI) but is lacking at the national level, except in countries which have a robust and effective regulatory system in place. This is partly due to a lack of drivers for governments to deliver best practice, and a lack of national knowledge on suitable standards (e.g. IFC Standards, and other tailored standards). There may be a role for funding institutions to effectively monitor and track EIAs and ESIAs to ensure they are conducted to a high standard. The Sustainable Development Goals are also anticipated to drive a more integrated approach.

What data and tools are available to support landscape and biodiversity planning?
Numerous data sources exist at the global, regional and local level. The effective use of data is challenged by poor data accessibility. Data sharing principles need to be tailored to the SEA process, in order to provide a standardized framework for sharing fit-for-purpose data in the open domain. Metadatabases can provide a good starting point. Importantly, the roles and responsibilities for ensuring digital accessibility need to be clarified. Some governments will be challenged by a lack of national capacity to develop the data sharing infrastructures. Businesses, on the other hand, will face the challenge of building a business-case for sharing data externally (ie. with their competitors).

Managing biodiversity impacts in a changing climate

While the potential physical or regulatory impact of climate change on business is relatively well recognised, the implications of climate change for biodiversity mitigation measures is an emerging issue. This session explored both species responses to climate change and implications for biodiversity management, and the potential for infrastructure to support species adaptation.

Climate change impacts on species are widespread. Species vulnerability assessments examine species' adaptability, exposure, and sensitivity to climate change and they have been applied to the world's birds, amphibians, and corals by the IUCN and its partners. Species that are Threatened on the IUCN Red List are not necessarily also vulnerable to climate change. Successful adaptation to climate change follows an iterative process - "monitor, review, revise".

"Ocean Sprawl" is the concept that a growing number of artificial structures in the ocean (e.g. power cables that span the entire ocean, wind turbines, oil & gas platforms, etc.) tend to lead to decreases in species diversity and non-indigenous species. There is however some evidence that these can build bridges between natural habitats. As such, in the right conditions, artificial structures could help species adapt to climate change.

Break-out group feedback

How can species' responses to climate change be factored into impact assessment and biodiversity management approaches? Uptake by companies will be facilitated by incorporating climate change into existing management models, such as the Mitigation Hierarchy, or regulatory frameworks. The regulatory environment is expected to change rapidly if the predictions on climate change impact are correct. Access to scientifically robust baseline data is necessary for recognizing range changes induced by climate change. Effective monitoring will be challenged by scale, availability and/or cost of collecting baseline information. In the absence of detailed site level data, broader scale/aggregated data will be helpful.

How do climate change impacts on biodiversity in turn impact on business? While Partners notice an increasing expectation from shareholders to address climate change impacts, the focus is not specific to impacts on biodiversity. Additionally, impact assessment processes are not currently able to account for future impacts caused by climate change-related species range shifts. As a result, climate change related impacts on biodiversity are not currently monitored. The business case for integrating climate change in biodiversity-management strategies is getting stronger, due to potential reputational risks and a need for detailed baseline information. The creation of a "monitoring partnership" with a biodiversity strategy may be beneficial.

What data and tools are available to support climate smart biodiversity management? Partners would see value in guidance on adjusting monitoring priorities and programmes (i.e. "Should you be monitoring something that you aren't currently monitoring?"), information on anticipating range shifts and on the broader context to judge acceptability of climate-smart activities. In terms of data, a tool that maps climate change risk to biodiversity at the project level, or a screening tool incorporating Wendy Foden's maps would be useful. It was however flagged that businesses would only use such information in several years' time once risks become more material to their operations. A shift in focus from climate change "risk" to "resilience" (e.g. of species or habitats in an area) may send a more positive message.

What is Proteus Partners' feedback on the shape of Proteus in 2018?

- The 2017 Impact survey identified climate change and natural capital as increasing priorities for Proteus partners.
- Suggestions for improvements provided by Partners under the 2017 Impact survey, were prioritized over the course of the meeting (figure). Results identified a need for continued data quality and development, with a focus on identifying new data resources for developing countries and site-level data.
- To broaden the value, UNEP-WCMC will explore releasing Technical Briefings to relevant parties after 6 months of publication (giving Partners the ability to veto publication if necessary), webinars will be opened to observers from outside of Proteus (for example CSBI, IPIECA and ICMM). The technical community of practice will continue to be exclusively for Proteus companies.
- Webinar topics suggested: Climate change adaptation with support for risk assessments, blue carbon and the IUCN Green List of Protected Areas.
- In relation to requests from consultants for access to data, UNEP-WCMC would prefer for Partners to share with consultants directly but more efficiency is needed. It was suggested that Partners create sub-accounts for consultants with UNEP-WCMC's guidance. UNEP-WCMC can provide reports on what the consultants have been using if necessary, with more sophisticated statistics and a dashboard planned in the redevelopment of IBAT. Contact details for focal points dealing with these issues will be provided by Partners. UNEP-WCMC will also consider geographically restricting IBAT for consultants.

Results of prioritisation of improvements suggested as part of 2017 Impact survey.

	Suggestion for improvement	**Votes**	**Rank**
Protected areas	Anticipating future protected areas/community claims	1	
	Better, and more concrete information about the protected areas	1	
	Work with national government organisations to improve the management of their protected area networks and areas of biodiversity value	0	
	Improve site-level information on PAs management and on other area types where local regulations are in place, including critical habitat proxy and biodiversity indicators	11	2
	Several features in the WDPA have corrupt geometry, consider checking and repairing	4	
Data developments	Access to a wider range of dataset and integration with regional/national datasets	7	3
	Include ecosystem services	7	3
	Assess potential for nature-based capital	0	
	Climate change risk mapping	7	3
	Continue to improve data quality in developing countries	14	1
	Automation of data updates	1	
	App	3	
	Help us think how we can turn data into risk-based priority areas	7	3
	Information to understand the difference between the two mangrove datasets	0	
General developments	Develop a matrix that can connect early investment in biodiversity management to return on investment due to stopping operations/claims/fines	2	
	Look ahead for role in Key Business Indicators etc.	0	
	Provide a platform with experiences identifying and managing biodiversity features, as well as contacts for key taxonomic groups	2	
	Globally relevant, accepted and relatively easy to apply metrics - working with government stakeholders to create a level playing field	4	

Annex 1: Summary of feedback survey

- All respondents were happy with the workshop format followed on Day 1 (27th June) and happy with the open format of the meeting in the second day. It was suggested to cover less and spend more time on each topic, and allocate more time for break-out groups.
- The majority were happy to continue holding a single annual meeting, but suggested conference calls on technical issues between meetings. Coordinating with and hosting the CSBI meeting in the same week and venue was particularly welcomed.
- The majority felt that the presentations and time available for discussion after the presentation sessions was just right, with Wendy Foden's presentation highlighted as particularly valuable among respondents and the climate change session particularly relevant and useful. Some felt that SEAs and ocean sprawl were of least relevance.
- The majority thought that measuring the impact of Proteus was of benefit, and suggested that more responses were needed from Partner companies and more awareness of the resources available via Proteus. A summary slide of key items to support the case for combined membership value would be useful. Partner input on how to broaden the input from with their companies is now sought.
- Responses to whether selected resources should be opened to a wider audience are shown below. Respondents noted that the value of Proteus should not be undermined. Any decisions should be revisited with Partners and clarified.