

## **Question 1 – What factors should be considered when prioritising areas for habitat expansion?**

A – Distribution of current resource, reducing fragmentation, buffering site and creating networks.

- Critical size – How big do we need? Beetle model used by forest research.
- SW nature map – SW observatory website.
- Norwich green infrastructure strategy – the scoring system used needs ground truthing.
- What about the big white gaps? i.e. the areas of the countryside that are not in the priority areas for habitat re-creation  
ELS, campaign for the farmed environment CFE (set aside replacement).  
Conservation grade goods  
Treatment wetland
- Wetland vision looked at opportunity for flood risk management, pollution control and biodiversity.
- Funders need framework guidance.

B - Current and future species distribution

- Used for bitterns and reed beds.
- Hilary Benn's review should look at this in relation to climate change.
- BICCONET – Plant data etc, overtime and in future.
- Roger Catchpole work
- Chris Thomas work on species movements
- When do we write off species?
- We can manage to increase resilience.

C – Potential (geology, hydrology and historic land use)

- Axiomatic that habitats need creating, the potential needs modelling
- Not the only filter
- There is a balance between potential and opportunity
- Should refine and develop maps under (A)

D –Ecosystem services

- If this is where the money is e.g. Natural Economy Northwest
- Biodiversity money should focus on where biodiversity gain can be made
- Other money – ecosystem services with biodiversity built in – use NERC Act
- Wetland vision created ecosystem services map slices!
- Set agenda by identifying priorities

E – Sustainability of gain

- HLF pump priming opportunity can this be extended to maintenance
- AGRI ENV. Are not long-term guaranteed.

- Increasing the area of habitat can mean management costs are actually less due to economies of scale.
- Country based targets for biod. Not being used as statutory target. But politically unlikely. In Regional Spatial Strategies good working but not being followed through in regional observatory.
- Natural Economy NW model for getting messages in economic language.

F --Other (imminent land-use change, habitat banking, relative success in habitat delivery to date, rarest habitat.....)

- Rarest habitat first? can be same as those that have seen biggest losses
- Intrinsically rare or rare because of decline
- How do we get the 30 priority areas agreed by all partners
- HLF would like to see regional forums developing a consensus on what to take forward
- BIGS trying to do this – also feed into Hilary Benn review

G - Opportunity

This was not discussed in detail but was assumed to be a key factor.