

Phase 2a Biodiversity Investment Fund (BIF)

A guide to carrying out an Ecological Assessment and Management Plan

Background

An Ecological Assessment and Management Plan (EAMP) is required to be produced in support of any application to the Phase 2a Biodiversity Investment Fund and will be submitted at Stage Two in the application process. If your project will be carried out on more than one site, an EAMP must be produced for each site. As a minimum, the EAMP should comprise of a Survey and associated Reporting. The objectives of each project's EAMP will be to:

- Outline the current ecological condition of the site and what the target objectives for habitat creation or restoration are;
- Specify measures that will result in the creation of target habitats/features as part of the site development (ensuring that impacts on any existing sensitive ecological feature are taken into consideration);
- Outline principles for monitoring, management and maintenance of the above features; and
- Outline the biodiversity units their project will deliver by habitat types.

Survey

A site visit carried out by a suitably experienced ecologist with the view to collecting information to describe the ecological baseline. This will involve recording all existing habitats¹ present within the project site's boundary and adjacent to it, assess their present condition (High, Medium and Low), and details on any protected species that are either present or have the potential to be present. Each habitat parcel within the project site's boundary with a varying condition is required to be recorded separately.

Reporting

A report is required that will contain details of what was found during the survey as well as processes and high level instructions on activities to manage the site in such a way as to meet the goals of the funding investment (i.e. the creation or restoration of ecological habitat). As a minimum the report is expected to contain the following sections:

- **Introduction** – This will include *Background* on the reasons for the production of this report and details on who has produced it. It will also state the broad objectives on the EAMP (in line with what is outlined in this guidance note). Any *Assumptions and Limitations* should also be clearly outlined here.
- **Baseline Environment** – A summary of the findings of the *Survey* including descriptions and condition of habitats present and species present (or potentially present). This should include a brief description of

¹ The UK Habitat Classification System should be used to record habitat types

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any relevant strategic significance against local plans and policies to each habitat parcel.

- **Ecological Creation, Enhancement and Protection** – This will outline the *Habitat Creation/Enhancement Works* that are proposed within the site and the extent of each separate parcel being created or restored of a different habitat type. It will also include what measures will be taken to protect any extant species and habitats during these works.
- **Indicative biodiversity benefits/units** – This will set out the forecast uplift in biodiversity value compared to the baseline using the latest DEFRA biodiversity metric². The score should be accompanied with a brief summary.
- **Monitoring, Management and Maintenance** – An overview of likely *Monitoring, Management and Maintenance Requirements* that will be required to ensure each ecological feature on site meets its target objective. This can be provided in tabular format if appropriate. This section should also include information and/or actions which will be taken if the habitat does not meet its target objective. The 30-year period begins once the habitat has been created.
- **Maps and Photographs** – Basic maps/diagrams should be provided showing the habitats and ecological features present on site pre and post completion of works. Maps/diagrams should delineate habitats of different types and conditions. Photographs should be provided as deemed relevant.

Methodology and Experience

Completion of the survey and reporting elements of the EAMP should broadly follow Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) as set out by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management³

Completion of the biodiversity accounting element should align with the latest metric and guidance provided by DEFRA through Natural England⁴.

It is expected that the EAMP is completed by a suitably experienced ecologist who meets the following criteria:

- Holds full membership to the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management or equivalent other recognised institution⁵ – verified through provision of name and membership number;
- Has experience of carrying out PEAs and producing habitat management plans;
- Has experience of carrying out biodiversity metric calculations; and
- Has a full working knowledge of UK wildlife legislation and policy.

Cost

² <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5850908674228224>

³ <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Guidelines-for-Preliminary-Ecological-Appraisal-Jan2018-1.pdf>

⁴ <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5850908674228224>

⁵ For example the Institute of Chartered Foresters

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A guide cost of up to £10,000 has been set for the production of the EAMP (survey and report). However, exceptional circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis based upon justification provided by the applicant. BIF funding cannot be used to cover the cost of any associated species licencing activity which may be required.

The BIF can be used for 100% of the cost to produce the EAMP (survey and report). All costs must be relevant for producing the EAMP for your project site(s). The cost will be considered as part of your indicative project total costs and assessed for value for money at Stage One.