



Scottish Consortium
for Rural Research

MINUTE OF THE 127TH MEETING OF THE SCRR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 16TH MAY 2016 AT SCHOOL OF GEOSCIENCES, ECCI, THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH, EH1 1LZ

Present:

Prof Steve Yearley (Chair)
Prof Stuart K Monro (Scientific Director and Chair)
Prof Willie Donachie (Secretary/Treasurer)
Prof Lee Innes (MRI)
Prof David Miller (JHI)
Dr Kevin O'Donnell (SASA)
Prof Martin Price (Centre for Mountain Studies, UHI)
Dr Kathy Velandar (Edinburgh Napier University)

Apologies:

Prof Pete Hollingsworth (RBGE)
Prof Geoff Simm (SRUC)

1. Welcome & Apologies: SY welcomed those present.

2. Minutes and matters arising from 126th Executive meeting:

4.2.1 Land Use Workshop: MP asked about developments with workshop report and subsequent proposed meeting. The report is now in its final stages and hopefully will be put on the SCRR website soon.

3.6.2 Reference to Centre for Climate changed removed from JHI report. The minute was approved and all other matters arising were covered in other agenda items.

3.6.4 Should read "Ecotourism: (KV) Napier has been involved in a number of European Ecotourism Network projects such as "Scenic routes" and modelling the economic impact of small local/specialist events".

3. Centres of Excellence and Networks: update on all networks

3.1 Moredun: (LI) A Steering Group for the new KE Centre is now established. The new Director's post has been advertised with a closing date of 27/5/2016. Currently the group is looking to establish branding, events and improving communication.

At MRI there are two main focuses for the Royal Highland Show; Biosecurity and Horse Health. All members are invited to attend the wine reception on the Friday of the show at 5.00pm. In July Moredun will be working with Cairngorm National Park and Ballindalloch Castle to host a debate on beef herd health but also a food event at the castle. In October HRH Princess Anne is visiting Moredun and an event around Design is being planned.

3.2 Sniffer - knowledge brokers for a resilient Scotland: No report for this meeting.

3.3 SRUC: Professor Wayne Powell has been appointed as the new Director of SRUC.

3.4 Social Sciences: (SY) Working with Geosciences now.

- New ERC Award to Miguel Sanchez who was working on the history of genomics in life sciences. This new award will enable him to look at the genomic revolution in human biology, animals and yeast.
- SKM noted that at a recent RSE Working Group on Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Emergency meeting one thing that emerged was the importance of engagement with social scientists.

3.5 SSAC (SKM) The new Chief Scientist has been appointed but the announcement has been delayed until after the Scottish Government elections to prevent the new CSO getting embroiled in political issues.

3.6. Other

3.6.1 Cameras: (KOD) The organisation is undergoing a reboot under the guidance of Fiona Comrie. The Rural Affairs Food and Environment Delivery (RAFE) Board is in the process of drafting outcomes and CAMERAS will provide the scientific input. There is also a move to coordinate research project bids between the partner organisations. One driver is the potential savings obtained by sharing resources.

3.6.2 JHI: (DM) The RHS provides opportunities for multiple events including “Best Soil in Show”,

There are 3 summer industry events all with SRUC, Cereals, Potatoes and Fruit. The attendance of government people links back to the KE Centre and CAMERAS.

The upcoming Referendum on EU membership has posed questions for JHI and the Board is considering its options for comment. The Committee members in the room indicated that their parent organisations were generally not expressing a public view either way.

The SNP manifesto contains a number of significant statements which may affect SCRR members:

1. Bring forward a climate change bill
2. Bring forward a zero waste bill
3. Appoint a national chef to develop Scottish Standards
4. Encourage the co-location of mains sector and industrial bodies into a National Food and Drink Campus.

The latter point stimulated further discussion on what this may mean for opportunities relevant bodies especially SCRR members.

4. Events

4.1 Annual Lecture 2017: The identification of a speaker for the Peter Wilson Lecture 2017 needs to be progressed. A number of topics were previously identified

- One Health
 - Evidence Based Conservation
 - History Heritage and Archaeology
- In addition there were suggestions for
- New CEO SRUC
 - New Chief Scientific Advisor

- Ecotourism for Sustainable Development

After discussion it was agreed that Evidence Based Conservation would be the topic for the 2017 Lecture. Two names were suggested, Andrew Pullin and William Sutherland.

4.2 Workshops:

4.2.1 Land Use Reform: The report for workshop in Perth is nearly finalised and will be posted on the SCRR website soon.

4.2.2 Follow up workshop on Land Reform: Needs to be planned for 2017. This could be another Round Table. The Executive discussed this at length and agreed that it would be sensible to wait for further developments.

4.2.3 Follow up on Life in the Extremes: A more scientific meeting will be held bringing together scientists from across Scotland in the different disciplines relevant to this topic.

4.2.4 Scotia Agricultural Club: SKM and WD met with John Oldham from the Scotia Club to discuss interactions. Possible areas for collaboration are an essay prize for undergraduates, a Public Lecture and jointly sponsoring the Land Use Workshop (see 4.2.2 above).

4.2.5 Living Collections: A good number of the SCRR members have living collections. This shared responsibility and the issues that arise for making the data available may be the basis of a very interesting meeting. SKM and WD to form a working Group for this with a meeting to be held in August.

4.3 Directors' Lunches

- 03 October 2016: Executive Committee and Directors' Lunch; Moredun Research Institute, Bush Estate, Penicuik, Midlothian, EH26 0PZ
- 07 November 2016: AGM and Board Meeting Edinburgh Napier University.
- February 2017: Executive Committee and Directors' Lunch; National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh
- April 2017: Executive Committee and Directors' Lunch; BGS Heriot Watt Campus, Edinburgh

5. Membership

5.1 Consortium: The National Trust for Scotland and the University of St Andrews still indicate a strong interest in joining SCRR but have not signed up. SKM and WD will follow up on this.

5.2 Executive Committee: At the previous Executive meeting it was agreed that recruitment of a CAMERAS representative would be desirable. Dr Kevin O'Donnell, Acting CEO at SASA, was approached, and agreed to join the Executive Committee.

6. Finances: WD reported that the Finances remain healthy. A number of member organisations who have still not paid their subscriptions for 2015/16 will be contacted again.

7. Publicity and Communications

7.1 SCRR Website: The website is being overhauled and reconfigured.

7.2 SCRR Newsletter: The next newsletter is due for the end of May but submissions have been slow in coming.

8. Any other business:

8.1 (KOD) The Chief Plant Officer/Head of SASA post has not been advertised as yet with no indication when it will be. KOD remains as Acting Head.

8.2 (KOD) Edinburgh Council Development Sub Committee are considering a major housing development submission next to SASA's site.

9. Date and place of next Executive meeting

03 October 2016: Executive Committee and Directors' Lunch; Moredun Research Institute, Bush Estate, Penicuik, Midlothian, EH26 0PZ

KEY	Prof Steve Yearley	SY
	Prof Stuart K Monro	SKM
	Prof Willie Donachie	WD
	Dr Kathy Velander	KV
	Prof David Miller	DM
	Dr Kevin O'Donnell	KOD
	Prof Lee Innes	LI
	Prof Martin Price	MP