

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE WEST ROSS DEER MANAGEMENT GROUP  
HELD AT ACHNASHEEN HALL, ACHNASHEEN RAILWAY STATION  
THURSDAY 28<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2019**

Present:	Randal Wilson Alasdair MacDonald Ruari Matheson Jake Buckthorp Mark Lorimer Craig McIntosh Danny Potter Kevin Frediani David Neilson Barbara MacDonald Andrew Oliver Kenny Ross Ronnie Ross David Bennett Donald Macrae	Chairman Dundonnell Fannich Foich Inverbroom Inverbroom Inverbroom Inverewe Inverewe Letterewe Letterewe Lochrosque, Cabuie and West Fannich Lochrosque, Cabuie and West Fannich Strathbran Strathvaich
In Attendance:	Ken Bowlt Caroline Cook	Secretary/Treasurer Bowlts Chartered Surveyors
Apologies:	Stuart Allison Ian Allison Gary Ross Maurits Baron van Dedem Angus Davidson Hendrick van Beuningen Norman Kelman Donald MacLeod George Seligman Mark Seligman Edgar Seligman Patrick Creasey Graeme Taylor Sinclair Taylor Tamara Lawton Natasha Hutchison	Eilean Darach Eilean Darach Gruinard Fannich Fannich Foich Heights of Kinlochewe Kinlochewe Strathbran Strathbran Strathbran Strathvaich SNH SNH SNH Wester Ross Biosphere

Randal Wilson (RW) opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and thanked them for attending at what no doubt was a busy time for all.

The meeting then went on to discuss the following:-

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**1. MINUTE OF MEETING HELD ON 8<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2018**Action

The Minutes which were circulated previously were adopted, proposed by Ronnie Ross (RR) and seconded by Craig McIntosh (CM).

**2. MATTERS ARISING**

RW confirmed that there did not appear to be any matters arising from the Minutes of the previous meeting, it being agreed that all of the issues marked for action had either been completed or would be coming up later in the meeting.

**3. DEER MANAGEMENT PLAN ASSESSMENT****3.1 Assessment Date – 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2019**

RW confirmed that the date had been set for the Group's Deer Management Plan Assessment which would be carried out within the SNH office in Inverness on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2019. He advised that the Assessment would be attended by himself, Ken Bowlts (KSB) and Caroline Cook (CC).

In advising of this, RW confirmed that a lot of updating work was being undertaken with our Deer Management Plan, it being acknowledged that everyone had been asked to submit any changes they required to the plan and these were being implemented by CC and Mandy McWilliam of KSB's office. CC confirmed that this involved quite a bit of work in terms of amending individual plans for estates and thereafter plans for the Group as a whole, but she was confident that the work would be completed prior to the Assessment. RW also advised that once the amendments had been finalised, given that none of the changes envisaged to the Plan were contentious, the Plan would be loaded up on the Association's website.

CC

**3.2 Input from Victor Clements via ADMG**

RW advised that the Association of Deer Management Groups (ADMG) had some funding to assist Groups in moving through the Assessment process. As a result, Victor Clements (VC), who undertook the Group's Health Check, had agreed to review the Group's draft Assessment which it was thought would be issued by SNH up to a week before the Assessment meeting. RW, KSB and CC would then attend the Assessment Meeting, armed with VC's input and if any problems arose, VC would be able to advise.

RW confirmed that the benefit of having VC assist was that he already knew all about the Group's Deer Management Plan status, having carried out the Health Check, but also he had been involved in carrying out Health Checks for/

for quite a number of groups throughout Scotland and therefore had a great deal of knowledge about the wider picture which would be of benefit to us.

#### 4. **PRIORITY ACTIONS ARISING FROM DEER MANAGEMENT PLAN**

RW drew attention to the paper apart previously circulated to members highlighting the action list from the Deer Management Plan and advised that he would be working through that topic by topic, which he did as follows:-

##### 4.1 **Designated Sites**

###### 4.1.1 **Plan Target 1**

RW updated the Group with regard to the Section 7 Agreement with further surveys being undertaken by SNH and these would all be dealt with as results were known. RW confirmed that he would report further on any issues that arose

###### 4.1.2 **Plan Target 2**

RW confirmed that Tamara Lawton (TL) had confirmed to him that they had been unable to appoint a contractor with a view to drawing up a Management Plan for the deer stock and feral goats on the An Teallach SSSI due to funding difficulties but that this would be revisited moving forward. RW advised that he had received a reassurance from TL that the Group would not be “marked down” at the forthcoming Assessment due to the lack of progress on this issue.

##### 4.2 **Retained Existing Native Woodland Cover**

RW reiterated the position of the Group in that we were awaiting there to be a decision as to a common standard with regard to the methodology for any survey of existing woodlands before any work would be undertaken. He confirmed that this issue had previously been referred to the ADMG and we awaited a decision.

##### 4.3 **New Woodlands**

It was noted that the Forestry Commission had asked that the Group provide a letter from each member, confirming they were happy with the arrangements for the undertaking of this work. RW confirmed that we now had letters from every member within the Group and hopefully the Forestry Commission could continue to process the application for funding.

###### 4.4/

#### 4.4 **Carbon Sensitive Habitats**

The meeting noted that currently funding for Peatland Action had been reduced from £8 million to £1 million and therefore, given that we had been unsuccessful in obtaining funding for our collaborative proposal, it seemed less likely that this would progress in the current year. However, it was hoped that a further application could be made at some point in the future for this collaborative piece of work.

#### 4.5 **Habitat Monitoring**

RW ran through the progress to date on this action with CC confirming that she had received the habitat monitoring data from everyone, but only in the last week. She made some draft maps available at the meeting and confirmed that in due course, these would be circulated to members via email.

CC

CC confirmed that the Group would need to set a target percentage for areas of each habitat within the “low-medium” and it was agreed that there would be further consultation before agreeing targets.

There followed some discussion on location of plots, particularly with regard to Fannich. There was also discussion on methodology with RW confirming that the “Best Practice” methodology is what is advocated by the ADMG although it was accepted that the methodology may differ on designated areas.

Mark Lorimer (ML) highlighted that some of the trampling was undoubtedly not deer and therefore there shouldn't be a presumption that it was. There was general agreement on this point.

#### 4.6 **Public Access**

It was agreed that there needed to be a check to see whether Gruinard, Dundonnell, Eilean Darach and Lochluichart had now managed to get themselves on the Heading for the Scottish Hills website.

KSB

Barbara MacDonald (BM) made mention of the Fisherfield Six, being six Munros within Letterewe Estate. In particular, two of the hills were within the core stalking area and additional issues were being experienced as a result of some businesses guiding walkers around the Fisherfield Six.

#### 4.7/

## 4.7 Deer Population and Population Model

### 4.7.1 Model

RW confirmed that the Deer Population Model had essentially been agreed upon and was being used as a management tool to assist the Group in making decisions on deer management, including culling.

### 4.7.2 Use of Modelling

RW ran through progress to date on this action, it being noted that a considerable part of the previous meeting had been devoted to the workings of the Model and its implications, and in particular, the high mortality in the 17/18 winter.

CC issued some figures and advised that there needed to be agreement on what the mortality levels were for the 2017/18 season, the consensus being that this was probably about 30%.

There was then extensive discussion about the use of the Model and in particular the indications given by the Model that the Group would need to pull back on culling to bring deer numbers up. There was a general feeling that some of the data being used in the Model was not totally reliable, this including the helicopter count carried out in spring 2018 by SNH. Nevertheless, it was understood that the Group had to make best use of available data, and most importantly, had to continue collating data.

Kenny Ross (KR) confirmed that Lochluichart would be doing a helicopter deer count in the next few weeks and BM advised that Letterewe would be doing its usual helicopter count, possibly in July.

The importance of a recruitment count in late May was emphasised by Ronnie Ross (RR) and it was generally agreed that everyone on the ground should try to do some sample counts to work out recruitment at that time and then email the briefest of summaries to CC so that she could feed this into the Model.

After general discussion, it was agreed that mature stag numbers were falling and there needed to be a commitment to a reduced cull, this being emphasised by KR. Set against this, there was also a feeling that members had sporting culls to maintain and therefore it was accepted that there were some difficult choices to be made moving forward.

To/

To illustrate this, KSB highlighted an extract from the Population Model projecting 2018 to 2023 which was circulated at the meeting. This showed that the 2018 helicopter counted spring population had a density of 8.69 per km<sup>2</sup> and due to the high mortality estimated at 30% in 2018, deer numbers would be shrinking below 8 per km<sup>2</sup> and only by reducing culls significantly could we hope to have the population back up over 8 per km<sup>2</sup> by spring 2023, this assuming morality returned to normal levels.

Effectively, this meant that culls for the Group area had to reduce to around 160 stags and 253 hinds per season and then using historic figures, CC had allocated this out per estate and circulated another sheet showing where cull levels would have to be on an estate by estate basis. These are both attached to allow people to review these at leisure in the knowledge that there will require to be further discussion moving forward.

RW emphasised the importance of the Group collecting data on a sensible basis and with this in mind, the appointment of two count coordinators was confirmed:--

- Jake Buckthorp (JB) for the northern part;
- KR for the southern part.

RW hoped that the two count coordinators would liaise and would use best endeavours to ensure that a sensible counting programme was agreed and implemented and most importantly, data returned to KSB's office.

JB/KR

#### 4.8 **Deer Welfare**

RW confirmed that KR is our man coordinating the deer welfare action and KR had highlighted that perhaps too much information was being requested on the return sheet and therefore after some discussion, it was agreed to reduce the data so that the data collected comprised:-

- number;
- date;
- species;
- hill weight;
- age estimation.

KSB agreed to devise an amended sheet and then issue this to all members.

KSB

5./

## **5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **5.1 Radio Channel**

There was some discussion on radio channels and whether there was a channel that could be tuned into by all members of the Group. Involved in the discussion were KR, Ruari Matheson (RM) and David Bennett (DB) and it was asked that the discussion be continued and information subsequently circulated to confirm if there was an open frequency available to the Group.

KR/RM/  
DB

### **5.2 Collaborative Action**

There was an extended and enthusiastic debate about the need for collaboration within the Group area which the active membership were committed to and was being encouraged by SNH. However, there was a suggestion from the floor that perhaps not all landowners within the area, and in particular some of the Government agencies, were buying fully into collaborative action, particularly when it came to out of season culls.

### **5.3 Wester Ross Biosphere – Five Year Strategic Plan**

KSB advised that Natasha Hutchison (NH) of Wester Ross Biosphere had forwarded a copy of the Group's five year Strategic Plan with her apology for being unable to attend the meeting. A copy is attached.

## **6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The AGM is being held on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

West Ross Deer Management Group  
Population Model 2018 - 2023

Target Density	8.1	Cull 5 year average	
Management Area (Ha)	105153	Stags	Hinds
		400	460
		175	175
		40%	55%
		55%	55%
Target Spring Population	8517	Cull	96

Stags	Hinds	Calves	Stag:Hind Ratio	Total	Density
Current (Spring) Population 2018	2946	4698	1.59	9134	8.69

Population Model	Stags	Hinds	Calves	Stag:Hind Ratio	Total	Density
2018 Spring Population	2946	4698	1490	1.59	9134	8.69
2018 Summer Population	3691	5443	871		10005	
2018/19 Cull	160	253	96		509	
2018 Mortality	627	925	183		1736	
2019 Spring Population	2904	4265	592	1.47	7760	7.38
2019 Summer Population	3199	4561	912		8672	
2019/20 Cull	160	253	96		509	
2019 Mortality	64	91	55		210	
2020 Spring Population	2975	4216	761	1.42	7953	7.56
2020 Summer Population	3356	4597	919		8872	
2020/21 Cull	160	253	96		509	
2020 Mortality	67	92	55		214	
2021 Spring Population	3129	4252	768	1.36	8149	7.75
2021 Summer Population	3513	4636	927		9076	
2021/22 Cull	160	253	96		509	
2021 Mortality	70	93	56		219	
2022 Spring Population	3283	4290	775	1.31	8348	7.94
2022 Summer Population	3670	4678	936		9284	
2022/23 Cull	160	253	96		509	
2022 Mortality	73	94	56		223	
2023 Spring Population	3437	4331	783	1.26	8551	8.13

Stag Mortality	Hind Mortality	Calf Mortality	Calving Rate
			16.0%
17.0%	17.0%	21.0%	
			20.0%
2.0%	2.0%	6.0%	
			20.0%
2.0%	2.0%	6.0%	
			20.0%
2.0%	2.0%	6.0%	
			20.0%
2.0%	2.0%	6.0%	

from sample summer count  
estimated as 15% (may be higher) + expected winter mortality



West Ross Deer Management Group  
5 Year Cull Targets 2018 - 2023

Estate	% of Stags (5 yr average)	Stags Cull	% Hinds (5 yr average)	Hinds Cull	% Calves (5 yr average)	Calves Cull
Dundonnell	7%	11	4%	11	3%	3
Eilean Darach, Little Gruinard and Larachantivore	6%	9	11%	29	15%	15
Fannich	8%	13	7%	18	6%	6
Foich and Strone	9%	14	9%	23	10%	10
Gruinard	8%	12	5%	12	3%	3
Heights of Kinlochewe	6%	10	2%	5	2%	2
Letterewe	9%	14	11%	28	8%	8
Inverbroom	9%	14	10%	26	9%	9
Lochluichart	14%	23	12%	30	14%	14
Lochrosque, Cabuie & West Fannich	11%	17	20%	51	18%	18
Kinlochewe	3%	5	3%	9	3%	3
Strathbran	5%	8	1%	4	2%	2
Strathvaich	1%	1	1%	3	1%	1
Tournalg	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0
Forest Enterprise	5%	8	2%	5	5%	5
Totals	100%	160	100%	253	100%	96

CC/0025

02/11/2018



# Wester Ross Biosphere Biosphere Ros an Iar Strategic Plan 2018–2023



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Man and  
the Biosphere  
Programme



WESTER ROSS  
UNESCO BIOSPHERE





## Background

The Wester Ross Biosphere (WRB) is a place where people live and actively work alongside their surroundings to promote a legacy, rich in both natural and cultural heritage. It is dominated by wild, rugged mountains, remote glens and long, steep sided straths (valleys), which extend down to the sea. The coastline features a wide variety of marine and coastal habitats, from exposed promontories and islands to the sheltered heads of long sea lochs.

Wester Ross has a strong Gaelic heritage which is entwined with the land and sea, having shaped, and been shaped by, our natural surroundings. The conditions are exposed and the terrain difficult to navigate and cultivate, so that it remains sparsely populated. Most settlements developed where the land meets the sea and at the confluences of major glens, as people typically combined cultivation of the flatter, less stony ground with fishing and harvesting other products from the sea. The mosaic of arable croft fields around local settlements, with outlying moorland common grazing, reflects an important land use of the West Highlands. Place names, sport (camanachd), boat-building, music and education in our schools are a few examples of how Gaelic continues to be a vital thread that runs through the rich fabric of life in Wester Ross.

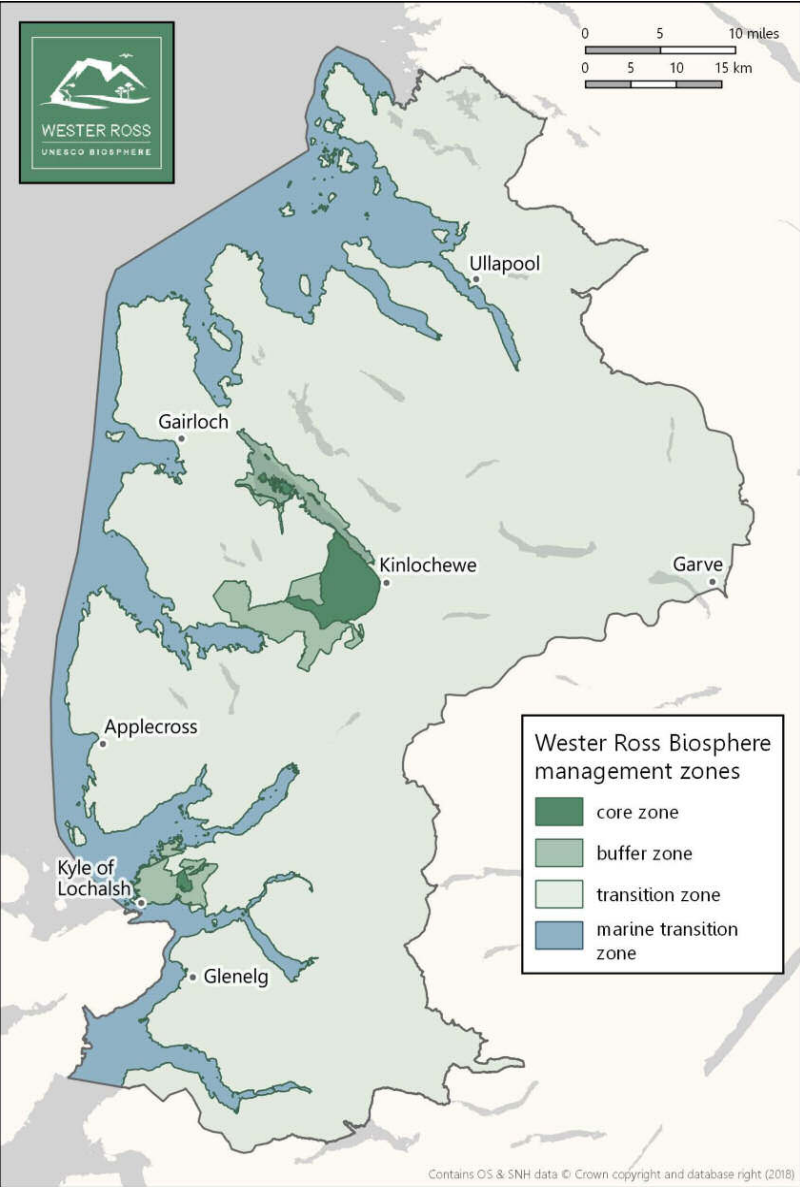
## Introduction

Biospheres are special areas that are nominated by the national committee of the Man and the Biosphere Program (MAB) and designated

by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to serve as international models of sustainable development; demonstrating how people and nature connect today to inspire a positive future. The biosphere is envisioned as a regional “landscape for learning” in which monitoring, research, education, and training are encouraged to support sustainable conservation of natural and managed ecosystems. It is a framework for regional cooperation involving government decisionmakers, scientists, resource managers, private organisations and local communities. Each biosphere itself is part of a global network for sharing information and experience to help address complex problems of conservation and development. Biospheres are non-statutory, nor are they lobbying organisations. In line with other biospheres around the UK and world, WRB aims to work in a neutral manner for the collective benefit of the people of Wester Ross.

Wester Ross has been home to a biosphere since 1976, in the form of the Beinn Eighe National Nature Reserve, due to its internationally important habitats and use as an ‘open-air’ laboratory for the long-term monitoring of environmental change. The UNESCO Biosphere Reserve criteria were changed in the 1990s to provide greater focus on people’s relationship with the environment, prompting a reapplication to the network for the wider area of Wester Ross.

In 2016, following a nomination process supported by the UK government, stakeholders and local communities, the original biosphere was expanded to cover 5,200 square kilometres of Wester Ross and Lochalsh. It became one of two biospheres in Scotland and one of 669 biospheres in 120 countries worldwide.







Wester Ross Biosphere Ltd was subsequently set up as a Not for Profit Company Limited by Guarantee, in order to develop and facilitate the delivery of the WRB Plan, with regard to the three functions of UNESCO biospheres – conservation, sustainable development and knowledge-sharing; to complement, but not compete, with the activities of other local organisations.

This document provides a description of the WRB’s strategy to achieve MAB objectives in Wester Ross, while incorporating potential synergies with Scottish Government objectives where appropriate. It is intended to be a ‘living’ document, and subject to yearly review in order to adapt to shifting local, national and geopolitical situations where necessary. As such, additional priorities for delivery may be identified in due course.

## Vision

To help people and communities to work together with our natural and cultural landscape to create a positive future.

## Mission Statement

*The Wester Ross Biosphere provides a framework for local people, organisations and businesses to work together for the sustainable development of our area along with the conservation of its natural and cultural heritage.*

## Governance and Delivery

Wester Ross Biosphere Ltd is a non-governmental organisation that oversees the activities of the WRB, and as such has no statutory authority or role with regard to national, regional and local laws. It is administered by a voluntary, fixed-term board (maximum of 15 directors) with a broad spectrum of skills and geographical representation. The board steers the strategic direction of WRB with contributions from the individual directors, stakeholders, staff, and communities in order to make decisions about project development. Staff manage the projects and present progress reports to the board at bimonthly meetings. An annual review of the strategic process will be undertaken by the board, and UNESCO will monitor and evaluate performance every 10 years.

## Strategic Themes

The primary goals and associated priorities were developed to reflect the short to medium term high-priority objectives. These goals remain consistent with MAB objectives to:

- Conserve and improve biological diversity;
- Build and share knowledge by facilitating, monitoring and utilising research;
- Identify and disseminate good practices for sustainable development;
- Integrate biospheres into relevant legislation, policies and/or programmes complemented by support for the functioning of biospheres.





The Wester Ross Biosphere has identified the following strategic themes to guide our future action and activities:

## Communication

Our primary aim is the engagement with and participation from the communities within the biosphere. The area covers over 5,200km<sup>2</sup> and is home to just over 8,000 people. An estimated 100,000 people visit annually, so there is great potential for our message to benefit people out with the Biosphere.

In terms of age profiles, Wester Ross has proportionately fewer 15-44-year-olds than the Highlands and Islands and an older profile age than Scotland as a whole. With about 1.5 people per km<sup>2</sup>, we believe it is integral to address youth outmigration by engaging with our young people, giving them a voice, and providing opportunities to create capacity.

### Raised awareness of the Biosphere designation and MAB programme in public, private and third sectors

**Key actions:**

- Develop a recognisable Wester Ross Biosphere identity
- Creation and distribution of promotional materials (including leaflets, online content and signage)
- Work with local stakeholders to identify existing linkages
- Identify and organise opportunities to deliver public educational events

**Key organisations:**

Local DMOs, NWH Geopark, SWT, NTS, SNH, HC, FCS, local communities, local secondary schools, UHI, HIE



## Youth engagement and inclusivity

**Key actions:**

- Organise and deliver a series of 2-day Learning for Sustainability workshops at each of the 3 high schools in Wester Ross (Ullapool, Gairloch and Plockton)
- Establish and mentor a Youth Board to operate in tandem with and contribute to main WRB Board, fostering aspirations of stewardship of our natural and cultural heritage
- Incentivise participation through annually-themed Biosphere competition and award

**Key organisations:** Local schools, colleges and universities

## Sustainable development

Biospheres are international models for sustainable development, connecting people and nature in such a way that leaves a positive legacy and an inspirational future. The WRB operates as a non-political banner under which disparate groups can come together to develop new opportunities. The Biosphere 'brand' belongs to all of our communities and can be used as a mark of quality as well as a mechanism to enhance it; building investor confidence, professional and civic pride.

### Businesses see value in promoting their association with the Biosphere

**Key actions:**

- Create a business charter to support local businesses and utilise joint promotion





- Development of ‘Locally Produced’ labelling scheme in order to enhance local supply chains and promote local products
- Identify opportunities for local distribution outlets

**Key organisations:** WRB Board, HIE, local businesses, SNH, NTS, SCF, HC

**Promote sustainable economic, social and environmental practices**

- Key actions:**
- Develop case studies of best practice from businesses and organisations
  - WRB acts as lead body for United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Wester Ross
  - Collaborate with partners to promote our natural and cultural heritage, and encourage sustainable environmental practices within businesses and industries

**Key organisations:** WRB Board, HIE, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, SCF, NTS, SNH, Scottish Government, HC, Historic Environment Scotland, local businesses

**Creation of solid partnerships to address key issues around sustainable tourism development**

- Key actions:**
- Gain influence at local and policy level through participation with groups active in the area
  - Promotion of our role in SHAPE project and objectives
  - Participation in Scotland’s West Coast Marine Tourism Collaboration to develop a new product for 2020’s Year of Coast and Waters / Awakening the Giant

**Key organisations:** HC, NC500, local DMOs, Visit Scotland, UHI, HIE, local businesses, NWH Geopark

**Financial sustainability of the Biosphere**

- Key actions:**
- Development of a WRB business plan
  - Foster effective relationships with current and potential funding partners and stakeholders
  - Explore opportunities to collaborate with other UNESCO-designated areas in Scotland to highlight the need for, and benefit of, core funding

**Key partners:** HIE, SNH, HC, SG, other UNESCO sites in Scotland

**Conservation**

People in the Highlands have been managing the landscape for centuries, and their current and historical knowledge are vital to the future of our environmental well-being. The Biosphere is inclusive by design – rather than keeping nature and people apart, it celebrates the way in which we interact with and take care of our natural and cultural heritage.

**Increase community awareness and understanding of the importance and value of natural heritage in WRB**

- Key actions:**
- Develop a WRB Biodiversity Plan
  - Work with local stakeholders and agencies to ensure WRB Biodiversity Plan objectives are included in partner management plans
  - Develop events and projects that enhance natural habitats, their



sustainable use and their contribution to health and well-being of local communities

**Key organisations:** SNH, SWRFT, WREN, SLEF, NTS, FCS, HC, SWT, SCF, SEPA

### Share good conservation practices

**Key actions:**

- Identify and collaborate with existing partner initiatives
- Develop and share case studies which highlight good natural and cultural heritage management

**Key organisations:** SNH, NTS, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, SCF, SWT, local museums and heritage groups

The WRB is viewed as a priority site for observing and implementing climate change research, monitoring and adaptation projects

**Key actions:**

- Create an inventory of existing research projects and related data sets in Anancaun Field Station, Beinn Eighe NNR
- Encourage all to contribute to the National Biodiversity Network
- Promote climate change-based research opportunities in WRB to colleges and universities

**Key organisations:** SNH, colleges and universities, SEPA

## Knowledge sharing

The Wester Ross Biosphere is a living laboratory. By supporting research, monitoring and educational projects, we can learn how to develop solutions that reconcile the conservation of our natural and cultural assets with their sustainable use.

### Education establishments actively seek to use WRB for their learning programs

**Key actions:**

- Raise awareness of the opportunities that WRB offers to schools, colleges and universities
- Establish partnerships with local, regional and international learning institutions to coordinate research
- Promote and support research which includes active participation from communities

**Key organisations:** WRB Board, public agencies, local schools, colleges and universities

### Establish a Biosphere Research Strategy

**Key actions:**

- Identify key research needs and associated partners
- Creation of new education/training programs, including establishing links with existing partner-run activities where appropriate

**Key organisations:** WRB Board, public agencies, colleges and universities







Encourage knowledge exchange and networking between partners and with other Biosphere Reserves

**Key actions:**

- Participate in knowledge exchange sessions with other Biospheres, including regional partnerships (NordMAB, UKMAB, EuroMAB, SHAPE, etc.)
- Produce case studies relevant to key research needs of local, regional and/or international relevance
- Series of local seminars about sustainable development and conservation highlighting local and international good practices; aimed at local communities, businesses, and agencies.

**Key organisations:** WRB Board, other BRs, public agencies, local businesses and groups

Collate historical records to build a cultural and heritage-based database for Wester Ross to inform future action

**Key actions:**

- Contact local authorities and cultural and heritage groups / museums to investigate collaborative opportunity to centralise heritage-based data
- Support and promote local museums and other heritage-based organisations
- Support and promote existing and emerging heritage-based activities, businesses and initiatives

**Key organisations:** Local authorities, heritage groups and museums





APPENDIX A

Work Plan Summary

Strategic Theme: Communication

Action Required	Measurable Target	Who	When	How / Resources
1. Raised awareness of the Biosphere designation and MAB programme in public, private and third sectors				
Develop a recognisable Wester Ross Biosphere identity	Membership increase by 10% of population after 5 years (~800)	Marketing / Communication (MC) Committee and local communities	Launch 2018, ongoing	WRB Board and project officer engagement with local communities
Creation and distribution of promotional materials (including leaflets, online content and signage)	Leaflets / Magnets / Window Stickers / Upgraded web site	MC Committee	Launch 2018, ongoing	£2,000 start up
Work with local stakeholders to identify existing linkages	Similar projects / agencies identified	WRB Board and local agencies	2018	Project officer and Board will liaise with known and new initiatives
Organise and/or identify opportunities to deliver public educational events	2 events/year	MC Committee, local agencies and communities	Launch 2018, ongoing	Project officer to coordinate
2. Youth Engagement and inclusivity				
School Outreach programmes	3 events/year (1 per high school)	Youth Board (YB) Committee, project officer, local schools	Launch 2018, ongoing	Project officer, school and volunteer time
Establish Youth Board	1-2 reps from each high school	YB Committee; schools	Launch 2018, ongoing	Project officer and volunteer time
Annual Biosphere Award	Criteria for award developed; award given	WRB Board; schools	Launch 2018, ongoing	—

Strategic Theme: Sustainable Development

Action Required	Measurable Target	Who	When	How / Resources
1. Businesses see value in promoting their association with WRB				
Create a business charter to support local businesses and utilise joint promotion	Business Charter created	Sustainable Devt (SD) Committee	2019 onwards	WRB to determine criteria based on local market values & experiences from other BRs
Development of ‘Locally Produced’ labelling scheme in order to enhance local supply chains and promote local products	Scheme produced; business uptake	SD , Nautral Heritage (NH) and Cultural Heritage (CH) Conservation Committees; agencies with an interest in promoting local products, businesses	Begin scoping in 2018 with launch in 2019	Project officer to oversee project and production
Identify opportunities for local distribution outlets	At least one potential outlet identified	SD Committee; agencies with an interest in promoting local products, businesses	2019, onwards	WRB board and project officer to lead
2. Promote sustainable economic, social and environmental practices				
Develop case studies of best practice from businesses and organisations	At least one case study/year	SD Committee to nominate case studies / local businesses may put forward a nomination	From 2019	Local business will liaise with project officer to coordinate
WRB acts as lead body for United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Wester Ross	WRB promotes SDGs within Wester Ross	WRB Board and network	From 2020	Collaboration with local authorities and agencies
Collaborate with partners to promote our cultural heritage, sustainable environmental practices and industries	Ongoing	WRB Board and network partners	From 2018	Partner collaboration
3. Solid partnerships within and outside WRB to address key issues around sustainable development				
Gain influence at local and policy level through participation with groups active in the area	WRB represented at relevant meetings/events	WRB Board, local authorities, DMOs, Visit Scotland	2018, onwards	Project officer to act as representative
Promotion of our role in SHAPE project and objectives	Project news and events circulated in local and social media	WRB Board, SHAPE Project Officer	2018-2020	—

Action Required	Measurable Target	Who	When	How / Resources
Participation in Scotland's West Coast Marine Tourism Collaboration	Attend steering group meetings / advise as required	Project officer	2018 - 2020	—
4. Financial Sustainability of the Biosphere				
Development of a WRB business plan	Plan produced	Finance and Resources (FR) Committee and project officer	2018	Consult with HIE
Foster effective relationships with current and potential funding partners and stakeholders	Identify new partners and stakeholders / maintain communication with those existing	FR Committee and project officer	Ongoing	WRB Board and stakeholder network
Explore opportunities to collaborate with other UNESCO-designated areas in Scotland to highlight the need for, and benefit of, core funding	Ongoing	FR Committee with UNESCO network in Scotland and UK	Ongoing	Project officer to act as representative from WRB

Strategic Theme: Conservation

Action Required	Measurable Target	Who	When	How / Resources
1. Increase the awareness and importance of natural heritage in WRB				
Develop a WRB Biodiversity Plan	New plan or revision of existing plans completed	NH Committee / WREN	2019-2020	Volunteers and local agencies
Work with local stakeholders (private and public) and agencies to ensure WRB Biodiversity Plan objectives are included in partner management plans	Included in plans such as Beinn Eighe, etc	NH Committee / Comm. group	2018 onward	WRB Board with support from stakeholders
Develop events and projects that enhance natural habitats, their sustainable use and their contribution to health and well-being of local communities	1-2 events per year (e.g. beach clean, biodiversity talk, workshop) Larger projects dependent on funding	NH Committee, volunteers and natural/cultural conservation groups	2018 onward	Events will be organised by Project Officer. Projects are funding dependent.

Action Required	Measurable Target	Who	When	How / Resources
2. Share good conservation practices				
Identify and collaborate with existing partner initiatives	Existing initiatives identified, and partner engagement confirmed	NH and CH committees, partner network	Ongoing	Shared resources between WRB and partners
Develop and share case studies which highlight good natural and cultural heritage management	1 x annual case study each for natural and cultural heritage management	NH and CH committees, partner network	2019 onward	WRB Board and project officer with support from partners
3. WRB is a priority site for climate change & ecosystem adaption research				
Create an inventory of existing research projects and related data sets in Anancaun Field Station, Beinn Eighe NNR	Where possible, data sets catalogued and categorised	Dependent on SNH availability and related educational institutions	Ongoing	SNH and volunteers
Encourage all to contribute to the National Biodiversity Network	—	NH Committee / WREN	Ongoing	Volunteers and local agencies
Promote climate change-based research opportunities in WRB to colleges and universities	Research opportunities in WRB actively promoted in education network	Education and NH Committees, project officer, partner network	Ongoing	Project officer as point of contact, Biodiversity Committee

Strategic Theme: Knowledge and Logistics

Action Required	Measurable Target	Who	When	How / Resources
1. Education establishments actively seek to use WRB for their learning programs				
Raise awareness of the opportunities that WRB offers to schools, colleges and universities	Engage with the 3 local high schools and UHI campuses	Education & Research (ER) Committee, Project Officer	Ongoing	WRB Board and project officer with support from partners
Establish partnerships with local, regional and international learning institutions to coordinate research		ER Committee	Ongoing	

Action Required	Measurable Target	Who	When	How / Resources
Promote and support research which includes active participation from communities	At least 1 partnered project/ year	ER Committee, partner agencies, community groups	2019 onward	Project officer as point of contact
2. Establish a Biosphere research strategy				
Identify key research needs and associated partners	Research needs identified and prioritised	WRB Board, educational partners	Ongoing	WRB Board and project officer with support from partners
Creation of new education/training programs, including establishing links with existing partner-run activities where appropriate	1 program every 2 years	ER Committee, partner agencies, community groups	Starting 2019	Dependent on funding and partners
3. Encourage knowledge exchange and networking between partners and other BRs				
Participate in knowledge exchange sessions with other Biospheres, including regional partnerships (NordMAB, UKMAB, EuroMAB, SHAPE, etc.)	Attend all meetings as required	Project Officer, WRB Board where applicable	Ongoing	—
Produce case studies relevant to key research needs of local, regional and/or international relevance	Research needs identified and prioritised - number of case studies and timeline dependent on priority	WRB Board, partner agencies, government bodies, community groups	TBC based on needs identified	Dependent on funding and partners
4. Collate historical records to build a cultural and heritage-based database to inform future action				
Contact local authorities and cultural and heritage groups / museums to investigate collaborative opportunity to centralise heritage-based data	Relevant groups / agencies identified and contacted.	Project Officer, SHAPE officer, CH Committee	Starting 2018	SHAPE project funds, volunteers
Support and promote local museums and other heritage-based organisations	-	CH Committee, project officer	Ongoing	—
Support and promote existing and emerging heritage-based activities, businesses and initiatives	-	CH AND NH Committees project officer	Ongoing	—

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United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



Man and  
the Biosphere  
Programme

