Biodiversity Action Reporting System

Project Input Guidance for Organisations in the North West
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www.ukbap-reporting.org.uk

BARS is a web-based tool designed as a one stop shop for reporting biodiversity activity in the UK.

The system enables everyone involved in biodiversity delivery to enter information on their projects and record progress towards action plans and targets. BARS uses drop-down lists and quantitative fields to provide a standardised structure so that the information can be integrated across users. This information can be searched by members of the public to learn about projects underway. A range of sophisticated reports is available to users enabling them to generate summaries from their data and to set their work in the wider context.

This document details a protocol for successful input and maintenance of information into the system by organisations involved in delivering biodiversity projects.

Getting Started

Access BARS at www.ukbap-reporting.org.uk. All the information in the system, with the exception of financial data and progress reports marked as confidential, is fully accessible, without login, via the menus available on the home page. It is worth spending some time exploring these menus to familiarise yourself with the system.

In order to enter or amend information you will need to log-in at the **Secure User Login** on the home page. Someone within your organisation may have already been allocated as BARS **Organisation Administrator,** if so they will be able to set you up with a user name and password. Alternatively speak to your **Local BAP Manager** who will also be able to set you up on the system. If you do not have an Local BAP Manager in post please contact BARS admin at info@ukbap-reporting.org.uk

The first time you log in you will be asked to accept the **BARS Terms & Conditions** and change your password. Logging in will automatically redirect you to the **BARS User Area**.
It is also a good idea to check your contact details are correct the first time you login. Access this information within the BARS User Area under **My Contact Details.**

Entering a new project

Each new project should be entered as one or more new **Actions** in the system.

Please do not enter aspirational projects only projects which you know are going ahead. Ideally information should be entered at the beginning of a project and progress updated regularly, but you should also try to enter as much information as possible on completed projects to ensure all information is captured.

Complex projects should be split up into separate actions. For example, employment of project officer, preparation of a management plan and habitat restoration work are separate elements of a single project, they should be entered as individual actions and linked using a **Label** (how to do this is explained in more detail under **Links & Labels** in Section 3 below).

1) Check that the action is not already in the system

Before entering an action, it is good practice to check that it has not already been entered by another partner. Use the **Action Search** facility from the home page to check this.

Home page >> **Actions & Impacts** dropdown >> **Action Search** >> **Search Action Details** Tab

Note: You do not have to be logged in to use the Action Search facility.

2) Navigate to the location you are going to set up your new action

From the BARS User area enter the **BARS Data Entry Application.** A navigation panel will appear on the left hand side of the screen which will list all the LBAPs, Company BAPs and Organisations you are associated with in the system.

Click on the beside your organisation name to expand the information available.

Selecting **Actions** will bring up a list of all your organisations actions within the system.

Select **Add Action**, a pop-up will prompt you to identify a lead organisation and user for this action. **Note: Pop-ups must be allowed in your browser in order for this function to work.**

In order for you to be able to continue entering information you must enter yourself as lead organisation and individual for this action. Then click **Add a New Action**, this will open up a form in a new window where you can enter details regarding your action.

3) Entering your project details

The **Action** form window is where you will enter all the information regarding your project. The form is capable of recording a large amount of information about your project, please feel free to make use of any of the fields provided. Any field heading within the action form written in red or with a red asterisk * is a compulsory entry and a form cannot be saved until all these fields are entered. In addition, there is a minimum input requirement in order that the information about your project correctly contributes to regional and national reports. Please follow the guidance below carefully to ensure you are fulfilling this minimum requirement.

Note: remember to Save the information under each tab before moving on to the next one

Tab	Minimum input requirement
Details	Please complete all compulsory entry fields, including: **Action Codes** are user defined codes. Please use the most appropriate codes for your project, for example you may want to use the project's initials and number your actions sequentially. **Action text** is a free text box where you enter a description of your project. Please be brief but specific, limiting yourself to a couple of sentences at the most.
Action Locations	Add locations where this project is being delivered, including region, county, district or site. Please be as specific as possible to avoid confusion. Locations can be chosen from your organisations main **Locations** list. Add new locations if you need them using **Add National location, Add SSSI/ASSI** or **Set up New Local Locations**.

	Note: If you are entering a site or local location you do not also need to specify the region and county, the system recognises these for you.
Action Species & Habitats	Input list of species & habitats being directly worked on in this project. This specifies the list of species and habitats for which Action Goals can be set below.
Action Goals	Action goals are very important as this is how contribution to numeric targets is recorded. Please try to set numeric goals for each of the habitats and species you have identified under **Action Species and Habitats** above using the options provided under the **Type** and **Units** dropdowns. If this is not possible you can specify your own action goals by selecting **User Defined** from the dropdown list under **Species/habitat**. **Note:** **Habitat action type definitions are as follows:** **Maintaining Extent** – Maintain the current extent of the resource. Aim for no reduction in area of habitat that currently qualifies as that BAP type **Achieving Condition** – Maintain or improve condition within the existing resource. Aim to maintain condition where it is good and improve condition where it is poor, within the existing BAP habitat resource **Restoration** – Improve the condition of relict habitat so that it qualifies as BAP habitat. Aim to restore areas of degraded habitat or remnant elements that do not currently qualify as that BAP type. **Expansion** – Increase the extent of the resource. Aim to establish BAP habitat on land where it is not present and where no significant relicts of the habitat currently exist. **Species action type definitions are as follows:** **Population size** – Maintain or increase species population size. **Range** – Maintain or increase species range
Links & labels	This is where you link your project to Habitat and Species **Action Plans** and their **Targets** within **Local BAPs** and **Company BAPs** to which you have been granted access. Choose **Add Links** and pick the relevant Action Plans, and Targets if appropriate, from the drop down list and click OK to add them. • If your organisation has a **Company BAP** already entered into the system you will automatically have access to make links to your organisation's **Action Plans** and **Targets**. • If you wish to link to a **Local BAP** and do not have access see **Linking to Local BAPs** section below. • If your project is not contributing to Local BAP or Company BAP Action Plans or Targets you do not need to make any links here and the Action will appear within the system as a **Standalone Action** for your organisation. You can also assign a label here which you can use to group several actions, for example under one project or funding stream. **Note: new labels have to be set up in your main Organisation Locations & Labels section and can only be set up by Organisation Administrators.** You

	can check who your **Organisation Administrator** is under the **Contacts** section for your organisation within the **BARS Data Entry Application**.
Organisations/ contacts	Please list other individuals (and their organisations) involved with this action, including contacts from funding bodies if applicable. You will be prompted to pick individuals from your organisation membership list but you can also find other BARS users by clicking on **Find Contact.** BARS will automatically send an e-mail to these individuals letting them know that they have been assigned an action by you. **Note: LBAP coordinators and organisation administrators are able to set up new users in the system** When an action is set up a lead role must be assigned. Action leads have full editing rights to the action and they can also enter progress reports on behalf of others. Any one else, not assigned a lead role will automatically be assigned a support role. These users will be able to view all the data for the action, record actual resource expenditure and provide progress reports for that action. You can also set up an automated e-mail reporting reminder here for individuals (including yourself!)
Resources	Add **Resource Estimates** here as **Pounds**, **Staff Days** or **Volunteer Days**. If your project has received funding from another body you will need to have added them to the Organisations/contacts list in order for them to appear in the funding body list.
Progress Reports	See **Reporting Progress** below
Status	See **Reporting Progress** below.
Comments	This is simply an extra space for you to record any additional comments about your project if you wish.

Once you have completed and saved all this information, your project will appear as an action under all the **Action Plans** you have linked to under **Links & labels**. If you have not linked to any Action Plans the project will appear as a **Standalone Action** under your organisation.

Linking to Local BAPs

Wherever organisations actions are being undertaken in partnership with and contributing towards delivery of an LBAP Action Plan a link should be made in BARS to the relevant plans (and targets where applicable). This should always be undertaken with agreement of the relevant contacts and can be done in one of three ways:

I. You can provide the LBAP Manager with the **BARS code** for the action (this is the 32 digit alphanumeric code, including curly brackets { } at the top of the Action Form window). They will then be able to link to the action from within the relevant Action Plan.
II. You can assign the LBAP Manager a lead role for your action. They will then have access to edit your action and will be able to make the relevant link themselves.
III. Request that the LBAP Manager assigns you full coordinator rights or a plan lead role within the LBAP you will then have access to make the link yourself under Links & Labels.

Reporting Progress

Once your project is in the system you will want to periodically report on progress. How often you need to report will depend on the length of the project and how quickly progress is taking place However, it is good practice to report at least once every **6 months** from the start of your project even if you are only reporting that no further progress has taken place. On some occasions you may also be requested to ensure all reports are up to date by a specific date in order to fit in with national or regional reporting rounds or as specified by funding bodies.

You can access the action information again at any time to input progress. Again, there is a minimum input requirement in order that the information you input contributes to Regional and National reporting. Please follow the guidance below carefully to ensure you are fulfilling this minimum requirement.

Action Goals	Report progress against each of your action goals. **Each time you do this please add a new progress update, do not amend previous ones as this information will be used to chart progress against the goals over time.** Do not worry if you have not previously set action goals, just add any achievement as a new action goal and report progress as achieved. Action goals are very important as this is how you contribution to numeric targets is recorded so it is essential that we report all achievements even if they weren’t anticipated.
Resources	Add any resource expenditure here. **Note: Some funding bodies now make adding this information a requirement of grant payments.**
Progress Reports	Add a summary of progress here and upload any documents relating to the project. **Note: The start date will automatically default to the end date of the last progress reports and the end date will default to the current date. These may be changed if required.**
Status	Update the status of your project by choosing from the drop down list. **Each time you do this please add a new status report, do not amend previous ones as this information will be used to chart progress of your project over time.**
Comments	Optional space to record any other comments you wish

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