

SSAC Minutes – 11 December 2019

New Register House, Edinburgh

Attendees:

Attendee	Position
Professor Paul Boyle	SSAC Chair
Professor Maggie Gill	SSAC Chair
Professor Sheila Rowan	Chief Scientific Adviser for Scotland (<i>ex officio member</i>)
Professor Andrew Millar	Chief Scientific Adviser ENRA (<i>ex officio member</i>)
Professor Robert Bowman	SSAC Member
Dr Caroline Cantley	SSAC Member
Professor Bob Ferrier	SSAC Member
Professor Iain Hunter	SSAC Member
Professor Mark Inall	SSAC Member
Professor Julian Jones	SSAC Member
Professor Colin McInnes	SSAC Member
Professor Andrew Mount	SSAC Member
Professor Marian Scott	SSAC Member
Mr Alan Settery	SSAC Member
Professor John Underhill	SSAC Member
Dr Roddy Macdonald	Deputy Director and Head of Higher Education and Science (Scottish Government)
Joanne Ward	Head of SSAC Secretariat/Science Advice and Engagement Team (SG)
Dr Heather Owen	SSAC Secretariat, SAE Team (SG)
Caroline Murray	SSAC Secretariat, SAE Team (SG)
Shona Nicol	Scottish Government – Team Leader, Data Standards
Kara Brydson	Executive Director, Fisheries Innovation Scotland (up to Item 6 only)

1. Welcome and Apologies

1.1 Professor Boyle welcomed new and existing SSAC members, Scottish Government officials and guest presenters to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Anna Dominiczak, David Crossman, Wayne Powell and Aziz Sheikh.

2. Minutes and Actions of last meeting

2.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as read. Secretariat and lead members updated the meeting on outstanding actions. All actions were completed except the following:

Action 14.1 – Ongoing – Secretariat to explore opportunities to present the contents of the Landscape report to senior SG staff and to explore a possible event in London to showcase the report together with Universities. Carried over from Action 13.5.

Action 14.4 – Ongoing – Secretariat circulated a copy of Professor Muscatelli’s report ‘Driving Innovation in Scotland – A National Mission’ to SSAC and will invite Professor Muscatelli to a future SSAC meeting.

Action 14.16 – Ongoing – Professor Crossman to provide an update at the next meeting on Guthrie Cards as a research resource.

Action 14.19 – Ongoing – Professor Millar updated on the DORA (Declaration on Research Assessment) impact factors, implementation of which is ongoing. He highlighted that SSAC may have a role to play in helping to share best practice in this area. **SSAC members to advise Professor Millar which academics/Vice Principals in their institutions are responsible for DORA implementation.**

3. CSA Update

3.1 Professor Sheila Rowan outlined examples of her recent external activity including work with the Science and Research Short Life Working Group, which is set to present recommendations to Science Minister Richard Lochhead.

3.2. There was some discussion around Scottish Government planning for the UN climate change summit COP26, due to be held in Glasgow in November 2020. Professor Gill advised that there would be the opportunity to suggest ideas for SSAC and SG involvement with COP26 at the SSAC dinner.

Action 15.1 – CSA and Secretariat to follow up (including with RSE) on enquiries about input into COP26 to ensure there is impact in this area.

4. SG Update

4.1 Roddy Macdonald provided an update of SG priorities and highlighted Budget delays due to the UK election. SG are considering the recommendations in Professor Muscatelli’s recent report. This may be an area where the SSAC may wish to provide advice. He also suggested that SSAC may wish to consider repeating the Science Landscape report, given the impact it has had in terms of use by Ministers and officials in meetings and speeches. There may be merit in considering joint activity in this area with the other devolved administrations.

5. Presentation by Fisheries Innovation Scotland

5.1 Kara Brydson, Executive Director, Fisheries Innovation Scotland (FIS) provided an overview of the work of FIS, including the need for secure ways of data sharing. She also extended an invitation for SSAC members to attend FIS’ Scottish Fisheries Conference on 1-2 July 2020 in St Andrews. <https://fiscot.org/>

Action 15.2 – Secretariat to provide Kara with data sharing contacts which would be helpful for FIS.

Professor Maggie Gill chaired the remainder of the meeting.

6. Update on Current Projects/Reports

6.1 **Sustainable Chemicals Note** – Iain Hunter advised that the project sub-group met recently and the report is ready to go to publication.

Action 15.3 – Secretariat to research and provide further advice regarding a suitable event at which to launch the Sustainable Chemicals Note.

6.2 **Fire Service Prevention Technology/Smart Homes Technology** - Alan Settery updated the group and advised that the next stage was to have further discussions with RSE colleagues to develop a high level position paper, as requested by the policy team that commissioned this work.

Action 15.4 – Secretariat to circulate the SFRS summary and literature review to new members for comment.

6.3 **RAS – Robotics and Autonomous Systems** – Colin McInnes thanked SSAC members for the comments provided to his draft RAS briefing note and the work of SG policy colleagues in facilitating the working groups with key stakeholders to take this work forward. Next steps are to finalise the RAS paper, taking on board comments from SSAC members and elsewhere.

Action 15.5 – SSAC members to provide comments on the draft RAS note if they have not already done so.

Action 15.6 – Colin McInnes to engage with Scottish Government social researchers to discuss whether they have any data relevant to public acceptability of RAS.

Action 15.7 – Secretariat to liaise with the RAS policy team around possible events in February or March, which could be used as a ‘hook’ to launch the briefing note.

6.4 **Environmental Impacts of the Scottish Manufacturing Industry** – Caroline Cantley advised that the project was underway with a Working Group set up to take this forward. The working group will meet for the first time on 18 December with further regular meetings set up in the new year. The report is expected to be published in July 2020.

6.5 **Geospatial Knowledge Project** – Mark Inall advised that the draft commissioning note had been refined and work was on-going with SG policy colleague Shona Nicol. Recruitment of a six-month research student to assist with the project is underway, with an expected end date for the project in September.

Action 15.8 – Secretariat to circulate the manufacturing and geospatial commissioning notes to new members.

Action 15.9 – Secretariat and Mark Inall to discuss arrangements regarding the recruitment of the intern.

7. Presentation on Data Standards and Remote Sensing by Shona Nicol

7.1 Shona Nicol provided an overview of the role of the Scottish Government in realising the value of data and to improve access to publicly held information. There was a discussion on access to data, and how signposting data is important. Attached link to website for more information www.spatialdata.gov.scot

8. Energy, Geothermal and Carbon Capture Usage and Storage (CCUS)

8.1 Secretariat provided an update on the above as outlined in SSAC Note 19/13, and explained that there may be an opportunity for the SSAC to provide advice on CCUS, geothermal and hydrogen fuel in the future.

9. Exploration Task Force

9.1 John Underhill provided an update of the above as outlined in SSAC Note 19/14.

10. National Data Repository

10.1 John Underhill provided an update on the above as outlined in SSAC Note 19/15. He also mentioned that the law changed on 1 April, which now allows information to be released publicly after two years instead of five. There may be opportunities for the data to help identify possible sites for carbon capture and storage.

11. Member Updates

11.1 Members highlighted the following events, which may be of interest to the SSAC:

- The Year of Coasts and Waters 2020
- The Year of Plant Health 2020
- 5G centre opening in Glasgow
- Cyber Week to be held in February 2020
- COP25 climate change summit in Madrid – snapshot of science-related activities published in Nature on 27 November.

12. Future Projects and PfG Summary

12.1 Secretariat advised that new members may wish to consider suggesting potential projects going forward, and highlighted the summary of the 2019-20 Programme for Government (SSAC Note 19/16) as a starting point.

Action 15.10 – Secretariat to circulate the PfG summary provided at the meeting.

13. AOB

Action 15.11 – Secretariat to include SSAC Reports feedback as standing agenda item.

13.2 SSAC discussed how to effectively reach out to policy teams to help foster impactful relationships.

Action 15.12 – Secretariat to invite relevant officials to present at a future meeting on the following topics: the Infrastructure Commission; and the ‘well-being economy’. Secretariat to take forward other suggestions for guest speakers made at the SSAC dinner.

13.3 The CSA thanked the outgoing Chair and members for their contributions to the SSAC; the outgoing Chair added his personal thanks to outgoing members.

14. Dates of next meetings

14.1 The 2020 meeting dates were agreed as 4 March, 4 June, 3 September and 3 December, alternating between Glasgow and Edinburgh, although consideration would be given to meetings outwith the central belt from SSAC member hosts.

Summary of Actions

No.	Action	Update
14.1	Ongoing – Secretariat to explore opportunities to present the contents of the Landscape report to senior SG staff and to explore a possible event in London to showcase the report together with Universities. Carried over from Action 13.5.	
14.4	Ongoing – Secretariat circulated a copy of Professor Muscatelli’s report ‘Driving Innovation in Scotland – A National Mission’ to SSAC and will invite Professor Muscatelli to a future SSAC meeting.	
14.16	Ongoing – Professor Crossman to provide an update at the next meeting on Guthrie Cards as a research resource.	
14.19	Ongoing – SSAC members to advise Professor Millar which academics/Vice Principals in their institutions are responsible for DORA implementation.	
15.1	CSA and Secretariat to follow up (including with RSE) on enquiries about input into COP26 to ensure there is impact in this area.	
15.2	Secretariat to provide Kara Brydson with data sharing contacts which would be helpful for FIS.	
15.3	Secretariat to research and provide further advice regarding a suitable event at which to launch the Sustainable Chemicals Note.	
15.4	Secretariat to circulate the SFRS summary and literature review to new members for comment.	Completed
15.5	SSAC members to provide comments on the draft RAS note if they have not already done so. A copy to be circulated to new members.	Completed
15.6	Colin McInnes to engage with Scottish Government social researchers to discuss whether they have any data relevant to public acceptability of RAS.	
15.7	Secretariat to liaise with the RAS policy team around possible events in February or March, which could be used as a ‘hook’ to launch the RAS briefing note.	Completed
15.8	Secretariat to circulate the manufacturing and geospatial commissioning notes to new members.	Completed 16 Dec
15.9	Secretariat and Mark Inall to discuss arrangements regarding the recruitment of the intern.	
15.10	Secretariat to circulate the PfG summary provided at the meeting.	Completed 16 Dec
15.11	Secretariat to include SSAC Reports feedback as standing agenda item.	
15.12	Secretariat to invite relevant officials to present at a future meeting on the following topics: the Infrastructure Commission; and the ‘well-being economy’. Secretariat to take forward other suggestions for guest speakers, made at the SSAC dinner.	