



**Drax Independent Advisory Board**  
**September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Telcon Meeting**  
**Timings: 14:00 – 17:00 BST**

**Attendees**

**IAB:** Sir John Beddington – IAB Chair (JB), Lord John Krebs (JK), Professor Sam Fankhauser (SF), Professor Virginia Dale (VD), Forest Research represented by Robert Matthews (RM).

**Drax:** Alan Knight – Director of Sustainability (AK), Emma Persson – Renewables Engagement Officer (EP), Richard Peberdy – Head of Sustainable Forests (RP), Kyla Cheynet – Sustainability Director at Drax Biomass (KC), Michael Goldsworthy – Sustainability Manager (MG), Matthew Rivers – Director of Alternative Fuels Origination (MR), Daphne Vlastari – Public Affairs Manager (DV), Vanessa Forbes – HSE Director (VF), Tanisha Beebee – Government Policy Senior Manager (TB), Darshana Myronidis – Head of Biomass Sustainability Compliance (DM), Richard Harris – Senior Fuels Developer Lead (RH).

**Introductory session**

1. JB introduced the session, and the meeting minutes and actions from the May IAB meetings were agreed.
2. AK introduced the Drax team and the agenda items for the session.

**Update on Drax's sustainability plan and IAB next steps**

3. AK presented the new sustainability plan for Drax which takes into account the company's growth and increased international presence over the past year. The new plan is underpinned by the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and focuses on Drax achieving three main outcomes – to be climate positive, nature positive, and people positive.

**Update on Healthy Forest Landscapes (HFL)**

4. RP updated the IAB on work to improve the HFL biodiversity metric. He presented a table that shows the different layers of scrutiny employed to ensure forest health in the areas where Drax sources the fibre for its biomass. These include literature reviews, monitoring projects (like HFL and Catchment Area Analysis) and third-party auditing. RP said that the team was looking at guidelines from the International Union for Conservation and Nature (IUCN) for further insights to developing the metric.
5. JK suggested organising a small group of stakeholders, including academics and other experts as well as representatives from local communities, to brainstorm how to measure biodiversity in large landscapes and to look into different approaches. JK also asked if Earth Observation (EO) to measure biodiversity trends using remote sensing is the best approach.
6. RP explained that EO gives the team a broad understanding, but it is only a starting point and the Drax team would still need to drill deeper to provide a full picture.
7. MG said that Drax is currently working on ways to show what the carbon levels would be on a particular landscape if there had been no demand for biomass. While this work will be



focused on carbon specifically, it could be used for further analysis to show what the impact on biodiversity would be in the absence of biomass demand.

- a. The IAB said it would be interested to learn more about this as it develops.
8. JB said that the IAB support Drax's approach. The IAB noted that measuring biodiversity is not straightforward – it involves continuous refinement of measures and monitoring work to ensure the full picture is captured, and made the following recommendations for Drax to:
  - a. Build on engagement efforts with local stakeholders through Earthworm Foundation to better understand specific areas.
  - b. Ensure that dynamic analysis is used to take account of biodiversity changes in a specific area.

#### **Update on UK energy crop sourcing**

9. TB presented the energy crops plan, the context, the potential and the challenge of sourcing energy crops. TB also talked through the energy crop strategy, which starts with the announcement of the partnership with the National Farmers' Union and will be followed by extensive stakeholder engagement and research including on sustainability and biodiversity associated with energy crop deployment.
10. Responding to the IAB's questions about the possibility of competition for land use, biodiversity and competition between land use for nature-based solutions, TB said that many of these important aspects and questions will be answered in the expert workshop which Drax is hosting in September.
11. JB asked for the summary from the expert workshop to be shared with the IAB so they can comment and advise. He said the IAB would like to be kept informed as this project and research develops.

#### **Update presentation on air quality**

12. VF presented the context and background on air quality, PM2.5, VOCs and particulate matter.
13. The IAB noted that they were pleased that Drax is closely focused on air quality.
14. JB suggested that VF return to update the IAB on new initiatives at the February 2022 meeting.

#### **Conclusions and wrap up**

15. JB asked about a summary of discussion that AK and his team has drafted that looks at the impact of the IAB's work and recommendations to Drax. AK said that Drax want to get the IAB's input.
16. RM said it would be helpful to understand where the IAB's input has impacted actions and outcomes.



17. JB said that proof points and clearer examples would help improve the summary of discussion and that this should be discussed at the next meeting.

18. JB thanked and closed the meeting.