

**European Community Directive
on the Conservation of Natural Habitats
and of Wild Fauna and Flora
(92/43/EEC)**

**Second Report by the United Kingdom under
Article 17
on the implementation of the Directive
from January 2001 to December 2006**

**Six-year Report for the EC Habitats Directive 2000-2006: Gibraltar
Mediterranean Biogeographic Region**

Please note that this is a section of the report. For the complete report visit <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/article17>

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Government of Gibraltar

**Six Year Report for
the EC Habitats
Directive 2000-2006:
Gibraltar**

August 2007

Wildlife (Gibraltar) Ltd.



WILDLIFE GIBRALTAR
Environmental Managers and Consultants

Report For

Albert Bruzon

Principal Secretary Environment

Ministry for the Environment

Joshua Hassan House

Secretary's Lane

Gibraltar

Main Contributors

Keith J. Bensusan

Charles E. Perez

Additional Contributor

John E. Cortes

Wildlife (Gibraltar) Ltd.

Gibraltar Botanic Gardens

Red Sands Road

P.O. Box 843

Gibraltar

Tel: 00 350 72639

Fax: 00 350 74022

E-mail: consult@wildlife.gib.gi

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Government of Gibraltar

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General Report

Introduction

This report has been submitted by the Government of Gibraltar in accordance with its obligations under Article 17 of the EC Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC), and conforms with the reporting format established by the Habitats Committee in 2005. The report has been prepared by Wildlife (Gibraltar) Ltd under contract to the Government of Gibraltar.

1. Legal framework

Legal texts that transpose the Directive can be found in the following website:

<http://www.gibraltarlaws.gov.gi/articles/1991-11o.pdf> Nature Protection Act 1991:
Principal Act: Act: No: 1991-11 under Part IIA Implementation of the Habitats Directive.

2. State of designation of Natura 2000 sites

The Government of Gibraltar proposed two sites as candidate SACs in June 2004 and these were approved as SCIs in the following decision:

2006/613/EC: Commission Decision of 19 July 2006 adopting, pursuant to Council Directive 92/43/EEC, the list of sites of Community importance for the Mediterranean biogeographical region (notified under document number C(2006) 3261).

Sites:

UKGIB0001 Rock of Gibraltar

200.52 ha.

UKGIB0002 Southern Waters of Gibraltar

5486.5 ha.

3. Management Tools

3.1: Management Plans

UKGIB0001 Rock of Gibraltar

Bensusan, K.J. & Perez, C.E. (2003) *A Conservation Action Plan for MOD sites in Gibraltar*. Gibraltar: Gibraltar Ornithological & Natural History Society (GONHS).

Cortes, J.E. (1978) *Conservation – A Future? Semi-natural Nature Reserve, Gibraltar: A Management Plan*. Gibraltar Ornithological Society.

Perez, C.E. & Bensusan, K.J. (2005) *Upper Rock Nature Reserve. A Management and Action Plan*. Gibraltar: The Gibraltar Ornithological & Natural History Society (GONHS).

Perez, C.E. (2006) *Biodiversity Action Plan, Gibraltar: Planning for Nature*. Gibraltar: Gibraltar Ornithological & Natural History Society (GONHS).

Aspects of Bensusan & Perez (2003) and Perez & Bensusan (2005) have been adopted, although in both cases some recommendations made have yet to be met. Not all the recommendations contained in the second report are directly relevant to wildlife conservation, but the SCI would benefit from the implementation of those that are. The management plan proposed by Perez (2006) is currently under consideration. It is important to highlight that Perez & Bensusan (2005) and Perez (2006) are fairly recent reports, and that the SCI has only recently been approved in the last year. Recommendations which complement management of the site as an SCI are likely to be adopted in the future.

Perez, C.E. (2006) *Biodiversity Action Plan, Gibraltar: Planning for Nature*. Gibraltar: Gibraltar Ornithological & Natural History Society (GONHS).

Perez (2006) makes relevant recommendations which are not yet implemented.

The Gibraltar Tourist Board and the Government of Gibraltar's Ministry for the Environment manage or fund management aspects of the Upper Rock Nature Reserve such as cleaning, clearing of firebreaks (which are important for floral diversity) and management of the Barbary Macaques. A team of workers has recently been created specifically for habitat management. Windmill Hill Flats, which forms part of the terrestrial SCI, is managed by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) as a Nature Conservation Area. A more coherent management body for SCIs would be needed and is being considered.

3.2: Other Planning Instruments

Government of Gibraltar, Department of Trade and Industry (1991) *The Gibraltar Development Plan 1991*. Gibraltar: Government of Gibraltar.

A new Gibraltar Development Plan is currently undergoing the public consultation process and has recently been published in draft form. The draft plan deals more thoroughly with environmental and nature conservation issues than did the old (1991) plan. The Draft Development Plan can be viewed at <http://www.gibdevplan.gov.gi/>. Directive 2001/42/EC (the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive) requires that such development plans be subjected to an assessment of their likely effect on the environment. With this in mind a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been undertaken as part of the plan making process. The assessment has considered each policy against a range of environmental criteria to assess its potential impact from a global to local scale.

4. Conservation Measures

Gibraltar law makes provision for the protection of habitats and species and transposes the provisions of the Habitats Directive, including the need for appropriate assessment of projects. The relevance of legislation to each site is highlighted next.

UKGIB0001 Rock of Gibraltar

The Upper Rock, which forms a large part of UKGIB0001, was designated as a nature reserve in 1993 under the 'Nature Conservation Area (Upper Rock) Designation Act, 1993' (L/N 51 of 1993; see <http://www.gibraltarlaws.gov.gi/articles/1993s051.pdf>). The 'Nature Protection Act, 1991' (L/N 11 of 1991; see <http://www.gibraltarlaws.gov.gi/articles/1991-11o.pdf>) protects a wide range of species of animals and plants, including all terrestrial species of community importance that are found in Gibraltar. The Act also allows for declaration of other areas as nature conservation areas.

UKGIB0002 Southern Waters of Gibraltar

The 'Nature Protection Act, 1991' provides protection for a wide range of marine species, including those that are of community importance. Marine nature reserve regulations were drafted in 1995 (see 'Marine Nature Reserve Regulations, 1995 (L/N 143 of 1995); <http://www.gibraltarlaws.gov.gi/articles/1995s143.pdf>). As there has now been designation of some of the marine area as an SCI under the Habitats Directive, there is a need to address management aspects, which will need to take into account the provisions of the Marine Nature Reserve Regulations.

5. Measures to avoid deterioration of habitats/habitats of species & disturbance of species

The 'Nature Protection Act, 1991' provides for such measures. These were further elaborated following the completion of the Upper Rock Management Plan and the Biodiversity Action Plan. Numerous recommendations in the recently drafted plans are currently being considered by the Government of Gibraltar.

6. Measures taken in relation to approval of plans and projects

Plans and projects within the SCIs are subject to approval by the Development and Planning Commission (DPC), a statutory body set up under the Town Planning Act. A new Development Plan for Gibraltar, which has recently been published in draft form and is undergoing a process of public consultation (<http://www.gibdevplan.gov.gi/>), discusses the integrity and conservation of green areas including the SCIs. Action plans have been drafted for areas included within SCIs (as well as areas lying outside SCIs) and for species which are of conservation concern at local, regional and European levels (Perez 2006).

7. Financing

Incidental funds are provided by the Gibraltar Government for specific activities which may have some beneficial effect for nature conservation, such as clearing of firebreaks (£60,502 p.a.) and managing of the Barbary macaques (approx. £62,000 p.a.). Furthermore, a team has been created for specific habitat management activities and path clearing (£37,140 p.a.).

There is a need to coordinate activities of this nature within a management programme for the sites. A sum of £30,000 p.a. has been provided to cover monitoring of the marine site. Provision for terrestrial monitoring and reporting is incidental to other Government contractual work.

EU Co-financing was obtained for the preparation of a management plan for the Upper Rock Nature Reserve (Perez & Bensusan 2005), a guide to the reserve and several small projects such as interpretation and tree planting. Provision was made under the European Regional Development Fund Objective 2 programme for a total of £77,320.

8. Measures taken to ensure coherence of the network

Gibraltar is a small territory and coherence of the network at a regional level would require cooperation with Spain. This would be particularly useful for migratory and transient species, both marine and terrestrial, which move between Spain and Gibraltar and their respective waters. Cooperation in this regard has been discussed as part of

the trilateral forum and the Cordoba agreement, which include representatives from Spain.

9. Measures taken to establish a surveillance system

Wildlife (Gibraltar) Ltd., have been contracted to monitor terrestrial habitats and species of community interest. The Government of Gibraltar is currently in the process of establishing a surveillance system for the Marine SCI.

10. Measures taken to ensure the protection of species

Legal measures are provided in the Nature Protection Act 1991 <http://www.gibraltarlaws.gov.gi/articles/1991-11o.pdf>

Bats

All species are protected under schedule 1 of the Nature Protection Act. In addition, some caves and tunnels that hold colonies of bats have been grilled. An educational booklet on bats in urban areas was prepared (Santana & Cortes 1996) and bat boxes have been erected in green areas and on new buildings. The Gibraltar Development and Planning Commission has a policy of placing conditions on developers to provide sites for bats (and swifts) on new buildings.

Santana, A. & Cortes, J. (1996) *Bats and Swifts in Buildings*. Gibraltar: Gibraltar Ornithological & Natural History Society (GONHS).

Reptiles

All reptile species (including *Chalcides bedriagai*, *Coluber hippocrepis* and sea turtles) are protected under schedule 1 of the Nature Protection Act. The restoration during the 1990s of a large expanse of habitat on the Great Sand Slopes on the east side of Gibraltar has substantially increased the potential range of *Chalcides bedriagai*, which has already begun to colonise the new habitat. This new area of habitat constitutes part of the terrestrial SCI.

Cortes, J.E., Linares, L. & Shaw, E. (1999) The restoration of the vegetation of the east slopes of the Rock of Gibraltar: background and first steps. *Almoraima* 23:65-86.

Gibraltar Ornithological & Natural History Society (2005) The East Side Sand Slopes. Plant and Fauna Status. *Gibraltar Nature News*, 9: 10.

Pinna nobilis

Protected under schedule 1 of the Nature Protection Act.

Cetaceans

All species are protected under schedule 1 of the Nature Protection Act.

Macrothele calpeiana

Protected under schedule 1 of the Nature Protection Act.

Perry, L. Distribution and population density of the funnelweb spider *Macrothele calpeiana* (Walckenaer, 1805) in Gibraltar. *In prep.*

11. Supporting measures and additional provisions

Research

All habitats included under the terrestrial SCI are frequently surveyed by the Gibraltar Ornithological & Natural History Society (GONHS) and the Gibraltar Botanic Gardens, as part of the 'Gibraltar Biodiversity Project' which began in 2003. Comprehensive inventories of the flora and fauna (vertebrates and invertebrates) have been compiled, with frequently updated and results published in literature produced by the GONHS and on the GONHS website (www.gonhs.org). Research on specific fields is summarised below:

Ornithology

A constant-effort bird ringing station exists on the Upper Rock Nature Reserve. This is manned on a daily basis during migration periods. Migration of soaring birds is frequently monitored by the GONHS. Seabirds migrating through the marine SCI are

also monitored regularly. Windmill Hill Flats, which forms part of '*UKGIB0001: Rock of Gibraltar*', formed an important part of PhD research into ecological interactions between resident and migrant passerine species. Surveying of passerines also took place on the Upper Rock, which is included within the terrestrial SCI.

Cetaceans

Cetaceans are frequently surveyed and monitored within the territorial waters of Gibraltar.

Botany

Plants are surveyed regularly. Comprehensive inventories exist for all sites with natural habitats in Gibraltar and these are updated regularly. The GONHS and Gibraltar Botanic Gardens are involved in research into the taxonomy and distribution of Gibraltar's endemic and near-endemic plant taxa.

Invertebrates

The lepidopteran fauna of Gibraltar is frequently surveyed and inventoried. A Rothamsted light trap runs throughout the year and is monitored on a daily basis. Other light traps are used regularly around Gibraltar, particularly within the terrestrial SCI. Other invertebrates are also monitored. The coleopteran fauna of Gibraltar is regularly surveyed. Recent results have included the description of a new taxon of jewel beetle (Coleoptera: Buprestidae) and a new species of ladybird (Coleoptera: Coccinellidae) for Europe. Likewise, some new or rare species of moths for Europe have recently been identified.

Introduction of Species

None.

Deliberate Introduction of Non-native Species

Several species were introduced into a part of the terrestrial SCI ('*UKGIB0001: Rock of Gibraltar*') during the early to mid-1900s, primarily in order to stabilise sand slopes. This part of the SCI contains two habitats of community importance, namely '2220: Dunes with *Euphorbia terracina*' and '2230: Malcolmietalia Dune Grassland'. The following introduced species are currently found here:

Rooikrans *Acacia cyclops*

Golden Wreath Wattle *Acacia saligna*

Century Plant *Agave americana* and *A. ghiesbreghtii*

Hottentot Fig *Carpobrotus edulis x acinaciformis*

Bermuda Buttercup *Oxalis pes-caprae*

Although the Century Plant and Hottentot Fig are widespread, dispersal of these species is limited and their control and eradication could easily be achieved. This is not the case for the Bermuda Buttercup, which is extremely widespread and probably impossible to eradicate. The two *Acacia* species (particularly the Rooikrans) cover a sizeable proportion of the abovementioned priority habitats and are spreading. The control and eradication of these species should be a priority for the conservation of the two listed habitats. Control measures for these species were recommended by Perez (2006).

Perez, C.E. (2006) *Biodiversity Action Plan, Gibraltar: Planning for Nature*. Gibraltar: Gibraltar Ornithological & Natural History Society (GONHS).

Education and Information

The Ministry for the Environment of the Government of Gibraltar takes part in educational campaigns. Seminars are organised annually during World Environment Day, which have tackled such subjects as biodiversity conservation and climate change. The Ministry also lectures at schools on wildlife and environmental issues and helps coordinate cleanup campaigns, within and outside of SCIs.

A comprehensive Management and Action Plan has been prepared by the Gibraltar Ornithological & Natural History Society for the Upper Rock Nature Reserve, which comprises a very large proportion of the terrestrial SCI. The production of this plan was partly funded by the Government of Gibraltar. A biodiversity action plan also exists, which includes recommendations for most priority habitats and species, and current SCIs. The GONHS has published a number of leaflets and booklets with the aim of promoting and conserving Gibraltar's species and habitats. As well as the literature listed below, the GONHS produces a biannual magazine and annual bird reports including scientific journals. The website of the GONHS (www.gonhs.org) provides ample information on Gibraltar's species and habitats, and the conservation of these.

Bensusan, K.J. & Perez, C.E. (2003) *A Conservation Action Plan for MOD sites in Gibraltar*. Gibraltar: Gibraltar Ornithological & Natural History Society (GONHS).

Gibraltar Ornithological & Natural History Society. *Gibraltar: We Discovered Bird Migration*. Information leaflet produced by the GONHS.

Perez, C. & Bensusan, K. (2005) *A Guide to the Upper Rock Nature Reserve*. Gibraltar: Gibraltar Ornithological & Natural History Society (GONHS).

Perez, C.E. (2006) *Biodiversity Action Plan, Gibraltar: Planning for Nature*. Gibraltar: Gibraltar Ornithological & Natural History Society (GONHS).

Santana, A. & Cortes, J. (1996) *Bats and Swifts in Buildings*. Gibraltar: Gibraltar Ornithological & Natural History Society (GONHS).