



**Government Response to the  
UK Steering Group Report on Biodiversity**

**May 1996**

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*Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Environment, the first Secretary of State and Deputy Prime Minister; the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, the Chancellor of the Exchequer; the President of the Board of Trade, the Secretaries of State for Health, Northern Ireland, National Heritage, Education and Employment, Defence and Transport, the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, the Secretary of State for Scotland, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; the Secretary of State for Wales and the Minister for Overseas Development by Command of Her Majesty May 1996*

# FOREWORD

BY THE PRIME MINISTER



In June 1992, I and over 150 Heads of State or Government signed the Convention on Biological Diversity at Rio de Janeiro. We had to take action to halt the worldwide loss of animal and plant species and genetic resources. The way to do this was for each country to take responsibility for saving and enhancing biodiversity within its borders and we agreed to draw up national plans and programmes.

The Government demonstrated its commitment to the Convention within eighteen months by publishing a detailed analysis of the United Kingdom's biodiversity and a number of broad objectives – the 59 steps – which committed the Government to action.

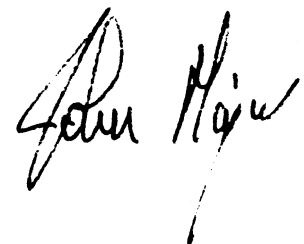
We recognise that we have a commitment to make to the richness of the world's wildlife. We are making an important contribution through the aid programme, the Darwin Initiative, biodiversity plans for the dependent territories, and the work that our institutions do.

At home we set up a Biodiversity Action Plan Steering Group involving senior people from non-government organisations, academic institutions, local government and government departments. The Group was asked to produce range of costed targets for key species and habitats, to improve the accessibility and coordination of data and to make recommendations on public awareness and involvement.

The Steering Group's report, published last December, was widely acclaimed both here and abroad. It challenges the Government to undertake a comprehensive programme of work to protect our most endangered species and enhance our most important habitats. This is a challenge I wholeheartedly welcome, and it has the Government's full support. Many of our species are in decline, and there is no room for complacency. We have started to take concerted action and this report spells out how we are going to take this forward.

But Government alone cannot stop the loss of plants and animals and implement the proposals in the report. I invite the non-governmental organisations, the countryside agencies, academic bodies and institutions, business and industry and local government to take up the challenge with us. It will require a concerted effort from us all.

In embarking on this great enterprise we will continue to be among the leading countries of the world in nature conservation and among the first to turn our international treaty commitments into positive action at home.



May 1996

## GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE UK STEERING GROUP REPORT ON BIODIVERSITY

*Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Environment, the first Secretary of State and Deputy Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the President of the Board of Trade, the Secretaries of State for Health, Northern Ireland, National Heritage, Education and Employment, Defence and Transport, the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, the Secretary of State for Scotland, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, the Secretary of State for Wales and the Minister for Overseas Development by Command of Her Majesty.*

### INTRODUCTION

1. The UK Biodiversity Steering Group report – *Meeting the Rio Challenge*, was published on 13 December 1995. The report was commissioned, following the launch of *Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan* (Cm2428), to undertake the following tasks:–

- \* to develop costed targets for key species and habitats;
- \* to suggest ways of improving the accessibility and co-ordination of information on biodiversity;
- \* to recommend ways of increasing public awareness and involvement in conserving biodiversity;
- \* to recommend ways of ensuring that commitments in the Plan were properly monitored and carried out; and
- \* to publish findings before the end of 1995.

2. The Government welcomes the Steering Group's report. It is a major contribution to the conservation of our natural heritage. In this document, the Government responds to the conclusions and proposals in the report; where extracts from the report are quoted they are set out below in bold type.

3. The Steering Group has produced a thorough and well balanced report, which has benefited from contributions from many different sectors. No other country has produced costed targets and action plans for threatened and declining species and habitats in this detail. One of the strengths of the Steering Group was that it contained representatives (in an individual capacity) from central and local Government; the nature conservation agencies; the collections; business, farming and land management; academic bodies and voluntary conservation organisations. The proposals contained in the report, therefore, represent a collective view from the widest spectrum of interest.

4. In this response, the Government:–

- \* endorses the main proposals in the report as the basis of follow up action by Country Groups for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, who will be responsible for implementing individual action plans, and a UK Group, to be chaired by the Department of the Environment, who will co-ordinate this process;
- \* provides a number of examples where new initiatives by Government departments and their agencies will help to take forward the proposals contained in the report; and
- \* invites 'champions' from non-government sectors to join the Government and its agencies in this exciting work.

## THE GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT TO CONSERVING BIODIVERSITY

5. The Government is committed to conserving biodiversity. It has signed and ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity, and was one of the first countries to produce a biodiversity strategy and action plan.
6. Considerable progress has been made since *Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan* was published in January 1994. A summary is given at Annex A showing progress for each of the 59 steps (the broad objectives set out in the Plan), and actions planned in 1996 and beyond.
7. As the Steering Group report states:–  
**“One of the strengths of the Plan is that, for the first time in a Government paper, it draws together existing instruments and programmes for nature conservation throughout the United Kingdom. It commits the UK Government to the strategic objective of conserving and, where possible, enhancing biological diversity within the UK and contributing to the conservation of global biodiversity through all appropriate mechanisms.”**
8. The report also goes on to say that:–  
**“Although the protection and enhancement of biodiversity is important in its own right, it should be seen as one of a family of initiatives arising from the Earth Summit. The UK plans and strategies are inter-connected”.**
9. The Government believes that maintaining biodiversity is an essential element of sustainable development, and is a measure of its success. The protection and enhancement of biodiversity is a responsibility of all departments which need to integrate economic and environmental policies. The Government recognises that if we are to make real progress towards sustainable development, we need to set a range of realistic, but challenging targets, based on the best available science, and on an assessment not only of the likely costs, but also of the potential benefits.
10. The Ministerial Committee on the Environment (EDE) is the key Government mechanism for considering questions of environment policy. In addition, Green Ministers in each department meet regularly to discuss environmental issues. Biodiversity will be an important element of these discussions and the Secretary of State for the Environment will report regularly on key issues, (see para 54).
11. The Government recognises the importance of integrating environmental issues into other policies. This is no easy task, but good progress is being made, and this work will be kept under regular review.

## THE STEERING GROUP REPORT

### **Action Plans for Key Species and Habitats**

12. The report contains action plans for 116 threatened and endangered species and 14 key habitats with a proposal to complete another 286 species plans and 24 habitat plans within three years, with the majority within two years.

13. The report explains that:–

**“in selecting species for which action plans have been prepared, we have used the following criteria:–**

- \* their numbers or range have declined substantially in recent years; or**
- \* they are endemic; or**
- \* they are under a high degree of international threat; or**
- \* they are covered by relevant Conventions, Directives or legislation.”**

14. For habitat action plans, the selection criteria were habitats:–

- “\* for which the UK has international obligations; or**
- \* which are at risk, such as those with a high rate of decline especially over the last 20 years, or which are rare; or**
- \* which may be functionally critical; or**
- \* which are important for key species.”**

15. The Government agrees the use of these criteria for selecting the lists of species and habitats, and notes that for species:–

**“More information is needed about the international status of most invertebrates and many lower plants before definitive statements on the status of species can be made for these groups”**

and for habitats:–

**“Further work is required to fill gaps, eg caves and natural rock exposures.”**

16. The report also proposes that:–

**“A list of characteristic species be produced for each key habitat within two years together with indicators of habitat quality”.**

17. The Government agrees that work should proceed on refining the lists, with the intention of publishing a further revision by 1997, and with producing lists of characteristic species for each key habitat (see para 47). This work should not hold up the preparation of the outstanding species and habitat action plans.

18. Each action plan contains objectives and targets for the species or habitat concerned based upon–

**“the judgement of the experts involved in the light of current knowledge. In many cases they represent a best estimate of an achievable but challenging target, rather than an optimum population or area”.**

19. The Government welcomes the objectives and targets put forward by the Group as relevant benchmarks against which the future success of conserving individual species and habitat types can be assessed. They require a commitment not only on the part of the Government and its agencies, but also of other bodies concerned, including business, the NGOs and especially the owners and managers of land and water. In some cases full attainment will be dependent on the successful negotiation of changes to policies such as the CAP, and will require the agreement of our partners in the European Union. It may therefore not be possible for all the targets to be achieved within the timescale envisaged by the Group.

20. An important part of the framework for action is already part of our law – the Habitats and Species Directive in particular. This is reflected in the proposals of the Group. To achieve all the Group's objectives will require the co-operation and active participation of all sectors. The objectives the Group has put Forward should therefore be adopted as indicative targets – an approach to setting out the forward environmental agenda suggested by the Lords Select Committee Report on Sustainable Development. Such indicative targets are especially relevant when:–

- \* the goals are longer term, and consequently more susceptible to re-appraisal and adjustment;
- \* when action cannot be taken by the Government alone; and
- \* where the issues involved are too complex to be reflected satisfactorily in a single binding target, but might be sensibly expressed in a broad and illustrative way.

21. The Government endorses the aims of the action plans and commits itself to playing its part with others to achieve these targets. The targets are challenging as they should be. In many cases they require additional or re-directed resources, and the Government will give the necessary priority to finding the resources, within the context of overall policies for public expenditure.

22. During implementation, new information, or the uncertainties of the biological world, may suggest the need for adjustments to an action plan, its objectives, targets or timescale. In such cases the UK Biodiversity Group in consultation with the Country Groups (see para 44) should consider what changes might be necessary seeking agreement from the Government where such changes are considered to be significant.

### **Action Plan Costs**

23. In preparing indicative costs for Species Plans and Habitats Plans, the report explains that:–

**“Best endeavours were made to estimate costs precisely, though this is an inexact science. For this purpose, targets have been set although we acknowledge that in some cases it was not possible to do so with great precision. Costs are therefore indicative only.”**

24. The costs identified, which are for the UK as a whole, are additional to existing financial commitments which on agri-environment spending and grant-aid to the statutory conservation agencies came to over £200 million in 1995/96. For species, total estimated costs per annum of which about half are expected to fall to the Government and its agencies are £3.8m 1997; £2.9m by 2000 and £2.4m by 2010. For habitats, the estimated costs (which cover public expenditure only) are £12.9m 1997; £24.5m by 2000 and £37.2m by 2010. These costs cover the 116 species and 14 habitat action plans produced to date. The further 286 species and 24 habitat action plans will involve additional costs.

25. The breakdown of costs for species action plans, which is explained in paras 6.5 and 6.6 of the report, is thorough and comprehensive, and draws on experience gained from English Nature's Species Recovery Programme. The breakdown of the summary costs for each habitat action plan is less comprehensive. The report acknowledges that the estimated costs:

**“are best approximations due to the lack of accurate data in many cases”**



26. The Government accepts the order of costs involved as a best estimate at this time by leading scientists and economists in this field. In some cases as more detailed implementation plans are drawn up the costs and benefits may well become clearer. If there are significant differences from the Group's estimates, those responsible for implementation (see para 44) will need to refer back to the UK Biodiversity Group (see para 45), but this should not delay action on implementation.

### Local Action Plans

27. As the report states:–

**“if the UK Biodiversity Action Plan is to be implemented successfully it requires some means of ensuring that the national strategy is translated into effective action at the local level. Local Biodiversity Action Plans are seen as a means by which such actions can be achieved. One of their main functions is to ensure that national targets for species and habitats are attained in a consistent manner throughout the UK. Local Plans should seek to include targets which reflect the values of local people and which are based on the range of local conditions, and thereby cater for local distinctiveness”.**

28. The Government welcomes this twin track approach, and supports the general approach and guidance in developing Local Biodiversity Action Plans explained in Annex C of the report. Considerable care should be taken in promoting this process with the parties concerned, including land managers and local businesses. As the reports says:

**“to be successful, the Plan should be owned by all the parties who have a key role in delivering the product”.**

29. The Government is pleased that the Steering Group for Local Agenda 21 has agreed in principle to set up a national Advisory Group to oversee the development of Local Biodiversity Action Plans. The Government also agrees that the first step should be to undertake a series of pilot projects, so that lessons may be learned in how best to involve the local community and in providing examples of good practice.

### Habitat Statements

30. Para 9.17 of *Biodiversity: the UK Action Plan* made clear that:–

**“it is important to monitor Biodiversity in the wider countryside as well as special sites since these areas comprise most of the country and support a great variety of wildlife”.**

31. The Habitat Statements within the report cover the whole of the UK, and provide a context for the preparation of the action plans and the table of issues contained in Chapter 5. The proposals contained in Section 4 “Conservation Direction” of each statement provide advice and ideas on the issues to address. The Government considers these helpful and departments should take them into account in developing national and local policy and action.

### information and Data

32. A key task of the Steering Group was to suggest ways of improving standardisation and access to information on biodiversity. Although the UK is exceptionally rich in biological data and information, it is fragmented and of uneven quality and reliability. Information is required to inform policy and decision making, monitor progress against targets, and to meet the needs of the Biodiversity Convention.

33. As the report states:–

**“Monitoring the long list of species is important in establishing a review of the health of biodiversity in the UK. Although the extent of the work required to produce baseline information is not yet complete, the aim should be to monitor the species, at least insofar as to detect undesirable change, within five years”**

34. The Government agrees that an essential first stage is to build on the work of the Co-ordinating Commission for Biological Recording (CCBR) to develop a data catalogue and standard terms list which identifies who holds what data, in what form, and where. This will be an early task for the Biodiversity Information Service (BIS) in the JNCC (see para 67) with an initial emphasis on species and habitats covered by the Steering Group report. The JNCC will agree working protocols and data requirements to enable the National Targets Group (see para 47) to oversee revisions of the priority species list for action plans.

35. The Government also agrees that standards lie at the heart of the proposed United Kingdom Biodiversity Database (UKBD). The UKBD should be a cost effective way to set standards, improve access and encourage greater use of existing and planned sources of data and information. At the national level, the report proposes a network of organisations which cooperate voluntarily. If this approach is to work, it is important that an organisation assumes the leadership in promoting the project. The Government will be charging the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) with this responsibility.

36. At the local level, the report recommends a consortium approach:–

**“whereby local data centres would receive funds for providing a service to a range of bodies (e.g. Local Authorities, country agencies, NRA, businesses, wildlife trusts, RSPB regions, etc)”**.

37. This approach will need careful handling. The Government sees that an early task for the UK Biodiversity Group (see para 45) will be to establish a small working group to take forward the first stage of the local approach – to develop the case for consortium funding and to set local standards.

38. Although the Government agrees that work on the first stages should proceed at both the national and local level, natural break points should be established at the end of these stages so that the findings can be reviewed before proceeding with the further stages.

### **Public Awareness and involvement**

39. The report contains a number of proposals for Government stimulated action: local action, action by key sectors, and education in its broadest sense. The approach proposed is to identify leading figures within each sector who can illustrate the importance of biodiversity conservation by providing examples of good practice.

40. The Government agrees this approach, and accepts that it has a leadership role in raising the profile of biodiversity and its relevance to sustainable development. It also recognises the role of local government in promoting the involvement of local communities, including land managers and businesses which will be crucial to the successful implementation of Local Biodiversity Action Plans and the effective implementation of national policies at the local level.

41. The report contains over 80 proposals to increase public awareness and involvement. The Government supports the high level statements (shown in gold in Annex D of the Report). An early task of the UK Biodiversity Group will be to prioritise the list, and to identify those for early action.

42. The report includes a number of recommendations to promote increased knowledge and understanding of biodiversity as part of a UK strategy for environmental education. These are generally in line with the measures arising out of the Scottish Working Group Report *Learning for Life*, and measures proposed in the Toyne Report. Since the publication of *Learning for Life*, Scottish Natural Heritage has developed and started to implement its environmental education strategy. The Department for Education and Employment and the Welsh Office have commended the 1993 Toyne Report as a basis for colleges and universities to review how the environment is treated within their curricula. DOE has commissioned Professor Toyne to conduct a short survey of environmental education provision in FHE for England and Wales; he has completed his survey and is expected to report soon.

### implementation

43. The report explains:

**“to achieve an effective outcome, there is a need to oversee the implementation of the proposals contained in this report. Some tasks may be handled by a UK Biodiversity Secretariat, for example providing a general information service and organising workshops and seminars. But many of our proposals will require a Focus Group or Groups to kick start and oversee the necessary action”.**

44. The Government agrees this approach. It will establish separate Biodiversity Groups in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to promote and monitor the implementation of the agreed plans. The Groups, which will be chaired by the appropriate Government Department, will have responsibility for:–

- \* promoting and stimulating action on the implementation of individual species and habitats action plans;
- \* liaising with the National Targets Group (see below) in preparing the next tranche of costed action plans;
- \* liaising with the Local Issues Group (see below) on good practice and consistency with the preparation of Local Biodiversity Action Plans;
- \* liaising with the Information Group (see below) on information and data, cooperating with the network to be overseen by the JNCC and developing local consortia;
- \* promoting public awareness and involvement through Government stimulated action, local action, promoting programmes of action by key sectors and the role of environmental education; and
- \* providing regular reports on progress to the UK Biodiversity Group.

45. The Government will also establish a UK Biodiversity Group whose role will include:–

- \* co-ordinating the work of the Country Groups;

- \* ensuring that the outstanding habitat and species action plans are prepared and follow common standards and agreed objectives, and are submitted to the Government for approval;
- \* providing advice to Government on the UK dimension of the biodiversity strategy; and
- \* reporting progress to the Government and the public (see para 54).

46. The UK Biodiversity Group will be chaired by the Department of the Environment. Membership will include the Chairmen of the Country Groups; the Chairmen of the support groups (see below), and a small number of representatives of central and local government, farming and land management, the voluntary conservation organisations and the collections.

47. The Country Groups and the UK Group will be helped in their tasks by the following Support Groups:—

\* **National Targets Group**

This Group will be tasked with co-ordinating work on the species lists and monitoring their status; producing lists of characteristic species for key habitats and co-ordinating the preparation of outstanding species and habitat action plans. The Group will cover marine as well as terrestrial species and habitats, and will include appropriate representation and expertise on the marine environment. The Group will be chaired by the Chief Executive of English Nature.

\* **information Group**

This Group will have responsibility for co-ordinating the development of the proposed UK Biodiversity Database and the development of locally based Biodiversity information Systems through the establishment of local consortia funding. It will be chaired by the Chief Officer of JNCC.

\* **Local issues Group**

This Group will provide guidance for the development of the Local Biodiversity Action Plans, and will assist with standards of good practice and training. The Government is pleased that the UK Local Agenda 21 Steering Group has agreed to provide the Chairman for this Group.

48. The procedure for developing, agreeing and implementing action plans – the co-operative approach adopted by the Steering Group, the Government response and implementation through the UK and Country Groups set out above – will be followed for the next tranche of action plans.

## Champions

49. The report proposes that:—

**“To stimulate action and to produce commitment we suggest that a champion should be invited to coordinate each plan and to act as a facilitator and catalyst by establishing an information network for the plan and generally stimulating the appropriate action”.**

50. The Government welcomes this innovative approach. Where there are obligations under international law – eg the Habitats and Species Directive – Government departments or their agencies should lead. But for many of the species action plans the

opportunity exists for conservation and other bodies to take the lead. This will involve providing resources, including possibly financial resources, to help to implement the agreed plan.

51. These bodies will in many cases be the champion of a species. However, the Government envisages champions also being individuals and companies who may wish to be directly associated with a species action plan through the provision of funds or "in-kind" support.

52. It will be to the UK Group, advised as appropriate by each Country Group, to appoint champions, and to agree the extent of their contribution. A list of contact points for each action plan is included at Annex B.

### **Secretariat**

53. A UK Biodiversity Secretariat will be established and located in DOE. This unit will provide advice within Government, maintain the link with the international convention, service the UK Group and organise workshops and seminars. It will also coordinate those proposals to increase public awareness and involvement which do not fall to the Country Groups and the Local issues Group.

### **Reporting Progress**

54. Progress will be reported in the following ways:–

- \* general progress will be reported through the Department of the Environment's Annual White Paper, which reports progress on the Government's 650 existing environmental commitments;
- \* the Secretary of State for the Environment will report on progress to Green Ministers on a regular basis;
- \* a regular UK national report to the Biodiversity Convention will be co-ordinated by the UK Biodiversity Secretariat; and
- \* a detailed report on progress in implementing the action plans, and the implications which arise from monitoring the species and habitat lists, will be made to Government by the UK Biodiversity Group every five years with the first report due in the year 2000 – a Millennium Biodiversity Report.

55. The Biodiversity Information Service (see para 67) will help to co-ordinate reporting progress towards the targets to the UK Biodiversity Group. The Government published a preliminary set of sustainable development indicators on 12 March 1996 (indicators of Sustainable Development for the United Kingdom HMSO ISBN 0 11 753174X). Some of the indicators are for wildlife (eg. number of breeding birds and plant diversity in hedgerows), and will be useful in monitoring progress towards the attainment of the objectives set out in *Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan*.

## **INITIATIVES**

56. As the report makes clear considerably more attention has been paid to environmental issues in recent years with consequent benefits for biodiversity. The actions column in Annex A shows very real progress on a number of fronts. There is no case for complacency, however, and while policies are now more sensitive to the needs of biodiversity, more needs to be done to conserve and enhance what we have.

57. There are many environmental policies and initiatives which the Government and its agencies are pursuing which should assist biodiversity: Some of these are explained in Chapter 10 of *Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan* and in the summary of progress against the 59 steps at Annex A. Other new initiatives include the following.

### **Reform of the CAP**

58. Positive benefits for the environment could accrue from further reform of the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP), as was recognised by the Steering Group. The Government reaffirmed its commitment to fundamental reform of the CAP in the English, Scottish and Welsh rural white papers. Government will:–

- \* continue to press for further reductions in production related support;
- \* continue to press for a greater proportion of expenditure on direct payment to farmers to be used to encourage environmentally beneficial and sustainable farming; and
- \* continue to promote research to develop further understanding of the effects of agriculture on the environment.

### **Commitment to Sustainable Development**

59. This *Common Inheritance: The UK Annual Report 1996* (Cm 3188) records action against the 650 commitments to sustainable development which the Government has made. The report contains a wide range of actions which will assist UK biodiversity. These include:–

- \* a review of the large combustion plant National Plan as part of the development of a national strategy to reduce sulphur dioxide emissions (a principal gas which causes acid rain which damages ecosystems, freshwater life and contributes to forest damage) which the Government announced in April 1996;
- \* preparing detailed proposals for statutory water quality objectives in 8 pilot river catchments; and
- \* setting up new Environment Agencies for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

### **Land Management**

60. Over the next five years the Government will review all the environmental land management schemes in England under the EC agri-environment regulation (2078/92), and seek proposals on how the schemes might be revised, including how they may make a strengthened contribution to the biodiversity targets. In advance of the formal reviews. Government will be ready to consider any simple changes to schemes that could assist in implementing the action plans.

- \* Countryside Stewardship, which from April 1996 is being run by MAFF, will contribute to all the terrestrial habitat action plans, other than woodlands, and to most of the other terrestrial habitats identified for further action plans. New options have been introduced to focus more support on arable field margins, which will help implement the cereal field margins plan, and on old meadows and pastures, which will help the purple moorgrass plan;
- \* MAFF has recently established new arrangements to consult on the integration and focus of environmental land management schemes. At the first meeting of the National Forum, in March 1996, a wide range of groups discussed the setting of

priorities in the light of the biodiversity action plans. This group, and regional consultation groups, will help advise on future responses to the action plans. The inter-departmental National Agri-environment Steering Group, established in autumn 1995, will provide a detailed input from Government, including the countryside agencies;

- \* in Wales, the Countryside Council for Wales operates Tir Cymen, a whole farm experimental scheme which pays farmers for a selection of environmental goods such as heather moorlands, flower rich pastures and meadows as well as landscape features and public access. It is only available in 3 pilot areas until 1997 when its operation will be reviewed and decisions taken on its future;
- \* in Scotland, a new Countryside Premium Scheme (CPS) has been proposed. The Government issued a consultation paper on 8 March 1996 for a new Scheme specifically designed to provide assistance for the management, enhancement and creation of particular habitats and features of importance to the natural heritage of Scotland. It will operate outwith the 10 designated Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) and include a range of opportunities currently only available to farmers and crofters within ESAs. A key feature of the proposals is that, for the first time, local farming, crofting and conservation interests will be involved in determining local conservation priorities to help inform the assessment of applications, and to target resources in a way which will maximise the conservation benefit; and
- \* in Northern Ireland, the Government has established an inter-departmental working group and environmental land management scheme to cover selected habitats in the 80% of Northern Ireland agricultural land not designated as ESA. This scheme is targeted for introduction in 1997, and will be similar in many respects to the Countryside Stewardship Scheme already in place in England.

61. Other land management initiatives include the following:—

- \* in March 1996, MAFF announced a new free advice scheme for farmers interested in converting to organic farming;
- \* the Government has established a Pesticides Forum to bring together key bodies seeking to promote the responsible use of pesticides, particularly by developing integrated pest and crop management systems;
- \* in February 1996, MAFF consulted on proposals for modifying national set-aside management rules to allow an increased proportion of set-aside to be left uncut; increase the length of time during which set-aside may remain uncut, and introduce restrictions on the period during which set-aside land may be cut or cultivated. New rules are expected from 1997. The Government is also pressing the European Commission to change EC set-aside rules to allow strips narrower than 20 metres to count as set-aside to encourage farmers to create more field margins; and
- \* over 50% of the MOD estate is governed by various forms of agricultural tenancies. Conservation clauses will be included in new Farm Business Tenancies wherever this is legally possible.

### **Woodland Planting and Management**

62. The Forestry Commission promotes the sustainable management and expansion of woodlands to provide a wide range of economic, environmental and social benefits,

including the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity. The FC and agricultural departments will contribute to the delivery of the action plans by:

- \* developing action plans for safeguarding and enhancing endangered species and habitats on the Forestry Commission's estate;
- \* targeting the various existing grants for woodland owners to help implement plans;
- \* adding a new Biodiversity Woodland improvement Grant within the Woodland Grant Scheme to assist measures to improve existing woods for species and habitats with action plans;
- \* developing methods of managing woodlands for general biodiversity benefits through research and guidance under the Forestry Authority Biodiversity Initiative, and co-ordinating these with delivery of the action plans; and
- \* taking account of the Farm Woodland Premium Scheme, operated by agricultural departments in the current environmental and economic evaluations and policy review.

### **Water and Coastal Management**

63. The Government is actively encouraging the preparation of water level, shoreline, estuary and coastal zone management plans which will assist the conservation of biodiversity, and will have a role to play in habitat action plans.

- \* MAFF recently announced an increase in the rate of grant available to internal Drainage Boards for new grant applications towards the cost of works to implement schemes to manage water levels in designated or proposed Special Protected Areas or Special Areas of Conservation.

### **Transport**

64. Measures include:–

- \* the National Air Quality Strategy to contain a package of measures for the transport sector building on work already done to reduce emissions and improve roadside enforcement;
- \* the Highways Agency undertaking research to assess the success of its habitat creation and translocation work;
- \* the Highways Agency producing new guidance to ensure that the management and maintenance of the trunk road network and innovative design measures for road schemes take full account of biodiversity; and
- \* the results of research commissioned by The Scottish Office to review national roads landscape and management policy will be published in August 1996, together with revised guidelines entitled *Cost Effective Landscape – Working with Nature*.

### **Species and Habitat Programmes**

65. Most of the Countryside Agencies' work contributes to the conservation of biodiversity. For example, English Nature's programme to achieve the sustainable management of SSSI's, including National Nature Reserves, and the designation of special sites, particularly those to fulfil international requirements, takes more than half of English Nature's total annual expenditure. During the past 5 years considerable resources have



been put into the restoration of lowland heathland, lowland raised bogs, reedbed restoration, estuary plans, grazing marsh and hay meadows. Major programmes have also been completed to develop public understanding, enjoyment and involvement in wildlife and natural features.

- \* English Nature has just launched a new Species Action Grants Scheme which will run initially for three years with a budget of £200K. Application for grants will be sought to implement work on species for which action plans have been prepared;
- \* English Nature's Species Recovery Programme has restored the population of 14 species to recovery target levels since 1991. The programme covers 60 species this year, including at least 35 full species recovery projects, at an annual budget of £535k. Priority is now being given to species listed in the UK Action Plan. English Nature's corporate plan contains a commitment to maintain the Species Recovery Programme until at least 2000, adding 10 new species each year;
- \* Scottish Natural Heritage's Species Action Programme was launched in July 1995 as a direct response to the UK Action Plan. Seventeen species are included in the implementation phase and the plan preparation phase has been completed for a further 10 species;
- \* The Countryside Council for Wales has recently undertaken a wide-ranging review of SSSIs in Wales. An active programme of research and survey is leading to new proposals for site protection, management and species conservation. All the major habitat formations (terrestrial, freshwater and marine) are taken into account; special species initiatives are being developed for rare species such as the fen orchid and shore dock and declining species such as the red squirrel. There is a new focus on the conservation genetics of small populations.
- \* English Nature started a new project on habitat restoration in April 1996 with the aim of piloting a range of practical techniques to reverse the effects of habitat fragmentation. The annual cost is £70k, and work will be focused in four pilot areas; and
- \* English Nature will launch a further new habitat action plan initiative during 1996, with an initial allocation of £200k over three years. The focus of this work will be the five priority habitats for which English Nature has lead responsibility, namely fens, reedbeds, grazing marsh, lowland heathland and saline lagoons.

## Research and Development

66. The Government undertakes an extensive programme of environmental research, and more focus is being given to research which is relevant to species and habitat conservation.

- \* Kew has been successful in obtaining £21.5 million from the Millennium Fund to help establish a seed bank. The aim of the project is to save 25,000 species of UK and worldwide flora. One population sample of every seed – bearing UK species, and 10% of the world's seed – bearing flora, will be prepared and frozen for conservation and made available for re-introduction into the wild well into the next century;
- \* following publication of the Steering Group's report the National Rivers Authority (now part of the Environment Agency) commissioned a national research project on water voles in collaboration with Oxford University;

- \* DOE will commission a research project to evaluate the practicality of the local biodiversity action plan guidelines, and develop working models for pilot projects as a basis for good practice; and
- \* from 1997/98 monies will be allocated by MAFF specifically to fund some of the priority areas of R & D identified in the Steering Group report. The Ministry is inviting proposals from potential contractors.

### information and Publicity

67. The Government is taking several initiatives to help inform and promote the conservation of biodiversity. These include:—

- \* the JNCC have established a Biodiversity Information Service which will:—
  - report to Government on the current status of species and habitats covered by *Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan*, and specifically those highlighted in the UK Steering Group report;
  - identify gaps in information required to report on the context and state of biodiversity, and encourage others to develop programmes to provide the information;
  - provide the Government and countryside agencies with information on nature conservation issues;
  - determine the nature of, and identify suitable datasets, and ensure that all datasets are managed to minimum necessary standards;
  - lead the development of consistent terms, models and definitions to facilitate information networking; and
  - contribute to a UK Biodiversity Database;
- \* the DOE is taking forward two initiatives aimed at young people. The first is a 'Wild Design' competition, which invites 8 – 15 year olds to illustrate definitions of biodiversity provided by a Panel of TV personalities. Winning entries will be displayed at an award ceremony at the National History Museum. The cost of running the competition will be about £40,000. 'Mission 2996' an environmental activity pack, with the theme biodiversity, and featuring the second adventure of the 'Planetary Caretaker' is being published. 50,000 packs have been produced initially;
- \* a major Scottish Biodiversity Conference will be held in Edinburgh on 30 September and 1 October 1996. It will be run jointly by SNH and Edinburgh University to bring together researchers, practitioners and policy makers to provide an overview of biodiversity trends and initiatives in Scotland. The conference will lead to a publication setting out the state of knowledge of Scotland's biodiversity, including priorities for action into the next millennium; and
- \* Scottish National Heritage is launching a new series of biodiversity publications. The first of these in the "Scotland's Living Landscapes" series are on Boglands and Soils, and in the "Naturally Scottish" series on Sea Eagles, Burnet Moths and Cetaceans (whales, dolphins and porpoises).

## Global Actions

68. As required, the Steering Group report concentrates on proposals to conserve and enhance biodiversity within the UK. This response provides an opportunity for Government to provide an update on international action.

- \* Through the bilateral aid programme the UK is helping developing countries and those in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union to adopt and implement policies and programmes which encourage sustainable development and good environmental practices;
- \* the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to which the UK has committed £130 million to date, has supported a number of projects aimed at helping developing countries to meet their obligations under the Biodiversity Convention;
- \* the UK will be pressing at the third meeting of the Parties, in Buenos Aires in November 1996, for outstanding financial issues to be resolved, as well as seeking a comprehensive response from the Conference of Parties to the CSD Forests Panel, and encouraging action to monitor and identify the components of biodiversity; and
- \* since 1993, 116 biodiversity projects costing £12 million have been funded under the Darwin Initiative, and early estimates of its achievements are encouraging. Over 60 UK institutions have collaborated with counterparts in 70 countries across four continents. By the end of this year, Darwin will have produced 600 trained host country participants, 30 papers with sustainable management recommendations, 23 published scientific papers and 17 databases.

## CONCLUSION

69. The Government wholeheartedly welcomes the Steering Group's report. There is bound to be argument about some of the detail, whether of substance, timescale or cost, not least because our knowledge of the science increases day by day.

70. The Government asked for costed action plans so that rational decisions could be taken and priorities re-ordered. That is what will happen. The criteria for selecting the species and habitats enables a rational assessment to be made; the approach is also novel in several respects. The proposals represent a consensus amongst a very wide range of interest groups and implementation will require no less a degree of cooperation, both at national and local level.

71. The prize for us all is not just that we shall be making an important contribution to the preservation and enhancement of our natural world, but that we will be able by our example to show others with interests no less disparate than our own what can be achieved and how it is practically possible to turn the words of an international convention into reality on the ground. The Government will be doing all it can to ensure that we conserve our wildlife, both for its own sake and for the enjoyment of our children.

## ANNEX A: PROGRESS ON THE 59 STEPS

introduction

1. *Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan (Cm 2428)* contained a list of broad targets for the Government and its nature conservation agencies, in partnership with others, to conserve and, where practicable, to enhance wild species and wildlife habitats over the next 20 years. These are commonly referred to as the “59 Steps”.
2. Several of these broad targets have been refined, prioritised and spelt out in more detail in the UK Steering Group Report – *Meeting the Rio Challenge*. This Annex shows the action that has been taken for each step, or broad target, since the publication of *Biodiversity: the UK Action Plan*, and the action that is proposed in 1996 and beyond.
3. It should be noted that space has only allowed (in the main) actions by Government and its agencies to be shown in the attached table. In many cases the voluntary sector has contributed to the progress shown, and this is gratefully acknowledged.

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
1	<p>Ensure that summary management plans are prepared, and where possible implemented, for each biological SSSI by the year 2004.</p>	<p><b>England</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Format for site management statements agreed.</li> <li>■ For earth science sites, site management briefs prepared for all SSSIs.</li> <li>■ Site objectives statements completed for SSSIs</li> <li>■ Management plans completed for all NNRs in England.</li> <li>■ Site lines, a quarterly newsletter produced by English Nature, sent to all owners and occupiers in England.</li> </ul> <p><b>Wales</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Format for SSSI summary management plans agreed.</li> <li>■ Management plans completed for 65 SSSIs and all 55 NNRS.</li> </ul> <p><b>Scotland</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Summary Management plans produced prior to notification of each SSSI.</li> <li>■ 442 currently in existence (in addition to the 70 NNRs now established).</li> <li>■ Rolling programme of visits to 20% of owners and occupiers per annum (approx 1,600 visits per annum).</li> <li>■ Schemes such as the Peatlands Management Scheme in Caithness and Sutherland and the Solway Merse Scheme in Dumfries and Galloway initiated to streamline completion of positive management agreements.</li> </ul> <p><b>Northern ireland</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Draft conservation plans proposed for all existing and proposed national/international sites.</li> </ul>	<p><b>England</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A programme to complete site management statements for all SSSIs by 1998 is in place in England.</li> </ul> <p><b>Wales</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A programme to complete management plans for all SSSIs by 2001 is in place.</li> </ul> <p><b>Scotland</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A programme to complete site management statements for all SSSIs (including geological sites) is in place with a rolling programme to develop their implementation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Northern ireland</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Draft plans will be finalised, and conservation plans for all remaining ASSIs will be prepared and implemented by 2004.</li> </ul>
2	<p>Continue to designate additional protected areas to deal with acknowledged gaps in the existing coverage, eg in relation to freshwater habitats, peatlands and inter-tidal wildlife habitats and species</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Areas for protection have all been identified and the designation process will continue in accordance with national and international obligations.</li> <li>■ Areas for designation under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EC) have been recommended for the whole of the UK and are in the process of evaluation following public consultation. Sites are forwarded to the European Commission when the Government is satisfied that representations received have been fully taken into account.</li> <li>■ A total of 77 biological ASSIs declared in Northern Ireland by end March 1996 including substantial areas of fresh water habitats, peatlands as well as inter-tidal habitats.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Country agency programmes committed to continue notification of SSSIs.</li> <li>■ English Nature aims to submit 85 proposed SSSIs for consideration every year until 2000, when equilibrium is expected.</li> <li>■ In Scotland priority relates to notifying sites which also qualify as SAC or SPAs; many of these are freshwater and peatland sites.</li> <li>■ In Northern Ireland remaining sites meriting ASSI status will be declared by 2001.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
3	<i>Complete the designation of all identified Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites Comply with the timetable for the designation of Special Areas of Conservation set down In the Habitats Directive by the year 2004.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A first tranche of 136 land based candidate SACs was submitted to the European Commission in June 1995.</li> <li>■ A further 75 candidate SACs, including 10 marine sites, were forwarded to the Commission in January 1996.</li> <li>■ Sites continue to be designated and notified under the Ramsar Convention (by end March 1996 there were 126 SPAs and 103 Ramsar sites).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Following further scientific work and public consultation, suitable additional candidate SACs will be forwarded to the Commission</li> <li>■ More than 100 potential UK SPAs still to be designated - aim is to designate 20 sites per annum</li> <li>■ Designation of qualifying SPAs to be largely completed by 2000.</li> <li>■ Plans to refine criteria for other species, in addition to birds and aquatic habitats, proposed for Ramsar sites.</li> <li>■ In Scotland all proposals for SACs will be submitted to the Commission by 1998, and all SPAs and Ramsar sites designated by 2000.</li> </ul>
4	<i>Create mechanisms for the effective protection and management of key wildlife areas in the marine environment.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The effective implementation of the Habitats Directive will provide a route to identify and implement conservation objectives within the marine environment.</li> <li>■ Consultation on proposed SACs took place in 1995. Guidelines for marine SAC management schemes have been prepared.</li> <li>■ Management plans well advanced for estuaries in England. In Wales, Marine Nature Reserve established at Skomer, and a decision on a second at Menai Strait awaited. In Scotland, marine consultation areas have been in place since 1989, and the Focus on Firths protect promotes integrated approach to management of large estuarine and marine areas. In Northern Ireland, Strangford Lough was declared a Marine Nature Reserve in 1995.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ English Nature to prepare plans for 50% of England's estuaries by the year 2000 initiating and implementing 7 plans per annum.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
5	<i>Ensure Biodiversity considerations are incorporated in the land use planning system.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Government published Planning Policy Guidance Note 9 on <u>Nature Conservation</u> in October 1994. This provides comprehensive advice to local authorities in England on how the Government's policies for nature conservation are to be reflected in land use planning under domestic and international law.</li> <li>■ PPG9 embodies the Government's commitment to sustainable development and to conserving the diversity of our wildlife.</li> <li>■ In Scotland, National Policy Guidelines (NPPG) contain policy statements of the requirements for planning authorities to provide for nature conservation in their development plans and in their decisions on individual planning applications.</li> <li>■ In Northern Ireland a consultation paper on a draft planning policy statement on Planning and Nature Conservation was issued in July 1995.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ PPG 9 will continue to provide comprehensive advice and guidance on the importance of both designated sites and undesignated areas for nature conservation, and to ensure that biodiversity issues are addressed in development plans.</li> <li>■ PPG1, the guidance note on the principles of the planning system, is being revised to reflect the Government's current position on sustainable development. In England, a Good Practice Guide on Planning and Sustainable Development aimed at local planning authorities. will be published in early 1997.</li> <li>■ In Scotland, the Secretary of State will take account of the general and specific interests of nature conservation in determining structure plans for Strathclyde and Dumfries and Galloway.</li> </ul>
6	<i>improve the database of the countryside surveys of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, while further developing the Scottish Office Land Cover of Scotland -Survey.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ DOE has completed and published a review of the policy uses and future requirements for countryside surveys in Great Britain.</li> <li>■ Facilities established to access and disseminate data from Countryside Survey 1990. A commercial release of the Countryside information System (CIS) now available including a digital catalogue of environmental data sets.</li> <li>■ The CCW is obtaining detailed data for individual terrestrial, freshwater and marine habitats in Wales. It will complete its Phase I habitat survey of lowland Wales during 1996. This will provide baseline data on the distribution and abundance of semi-natural habitats for the whole of lowland Wales.</li> <li>■ The Scottish Office has completed and published a review of the land cover of Scotland. The Macaulay Land Use Research institute (MLURI) act as agents (on behalf of the Government) to supply data to other organisations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Links to be established with other national databases and habitat surveys.</li> <li>■ Planning and preparation for Countryside Survey 2000 in Great Britain and complementary work in Northern Ireland to be initiated.</li> <li>■ In Scotland, consideration being given to whether LC88 should be repeated and, if so, how this might be progressed.</li> </ul>
7	<i>Utilise existing knowledge to identify prime biodiversity areas in the UK based on best available levels of data recorded and agree a strategy to protect and enhance them involving all interested parties.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Over 150 prime biodiversity areas have been identified in England, and a detailed strategy has been produced for the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Prime Biodiversity Area. SNH with the Biological Records Centre (BRC) has developed a methodology for identifying hotspots and will publish a report in 1996 on distribution of hotspots in Scotland.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ English Nature has set an objective to develop strategies for 21 PBAs within the Natural Areas programme.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
8	<i>Revise the Natural Area Map for England in 1994, completing a strategy for 6 natural area schemes with key objectives by 1995. In Scotland, publish maps of biographical, zones by 1995.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Countryside Commission, English Nature and English Heritage have worked together to produce a joint character map of England.</li> <li>■ English Nature has identified 92 terrestrial and 24 maritime natural areas, and work is in progress to provide profiles for each of these.</li> <li>■ SNH has mapped bio-geographic zones in Scotland and will publish an account of them by June 1996.</li> <li>■ Preliminary studies jointly undertaken by Scottish Natural Heritage and the institute of Terrestrial Ecology have been published.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ In England, a joint character map and descriptive statement for each area will be published and actions plans for nature and landscape conservation will be developed.</li> <li>■ A digital version of the regional character map will be available in the Countryside Information System.</li> <li>■ CCW will undertake habitat analyses to characterise different upland zones in Wales.</li> <li>■ In Scotland, further work is in hand to widen the biological basis of the zonation to incorporate a wider perspective of Scotland's natural heritage.</li> </ul>
9	<i>Complete the Marine Nature Conservation Review under the aegis of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ JNCC are coordinating the Marine Nature Conservation Review (MNCR) on behalf of the country agencies. This includes the establishment of common standards throughout Britain.</li> <li>■ Since 1987, many new field surveys of marine habitats have provided information on the nature and quality of marine habitats.</li> <li>■ The MNCR is developing a national marine biotopes classification and (through the EU LIFE funded programme <i>Bio Mar</i>) coordinating the development of national standards for marine data collection, storage and interpretation for application through the North East Atlantic. The classification will substantially enhance the marine elements of the current European Corine classification.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The MNCR will publish a series of foundation and regional reports.</li> <li>■ The MNCR which finishes in March 1998 will complete the marine biotopes classification and undertake a review of new survey methods.</li> <li>■ The results of the littoral survey of Northern Ireland will be published.</li> </ul>



Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
10	<i>Continue to implement new approaches to coastal flood defence and coast protection which work with, rather than against natural processes.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Many schemes now underway designed to work with natural processes such as beach nourishment, construction of beach control structures, and deliberate setting back of the line of defence where appropriate.</li> <li>■ Shoreline management increasingly being carried out within an overall strategy for flood and coastal defence through voluntary Shoreline Management Plans which will inform Statutory Local Plans and Structure Plans.</li> <li>■ Grants provided for beach management schemes and for strategic studies of coastal processes within coastal cells.</li> <li>■ Research commissioned into long term prediction of shoreline evolution and "soft engineering" approaches to control soft cliff erosion and the effectiveness of submerged offshore breakwaters.</li> <li>■ Guidance issued for production of Shoreline Management Plans for coastal cells and for inland waters, a procedural guide on water level management plans was published in June 1994.</li> <li>■ Work completed on a study into the effectiveness of Welsh Dune Systems as Coastal Defences.</li> <li>■ The saltmarsh option of the Habitat Scheme in England, introduced in May 1994, promotes the creation and extension of areas of saltmarsh on suitable coastland which as well as providing a valuable wildlife habitat also acts as a natural sea defence by dissipating wave energy.</li> <li>■ In Scotland PPG No. 7 Planning and Flooding was published. It supports an environmentally sensitive approach to flood prevention.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Encourage the creation of more intertidal habitats using the Habitat Scheme.</li> <li>■ Secure long term supplies of material for beach feeding.</li> <li>■ Ongoing research and development to monitor experimental set back schemes, studies of coastal cells and the processes and morphology of rivers, estuaries and coastlines.</li> <li>■ Encourage the production of water level management plans for all appropriate SSSIs by the end of 1998 and monitor progress.</li> <li>■ Monitor and evaluate saltmarsh option under the Habitat Scheme.</li> </ul>
11	<i>Designate sufficient marine SACs and SPAs and ensure the mechanisms are in place for their effective conservation under the Habitats and Birds Directives.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ 35 possible marine SACs have been identified. A first tranche of 10 candidates marine SACs was submitted to the European Commission in January 1996.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Further suitable candidate marine SACs to be sent to the Commission.</li> <li>■ Issue guidance on schemes of management for European Marine Sites and encourage relevant authorities to set up schemes of management for sites already submitted.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
12	<p><i>Produce estuaries management plans for 27 key estuaries in England by 1997, and in Scotland work towards the preparation of integrated management plans and cooperative frameworks for the implementation for Moray Firth, Solway Firth and the Firth of Forth by 1998; to be followed by other significant Scottish estuaries in due course. In Northern Ireland, complete plans for Strangford Lough and Belfast Lough.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Management plans being developed for the Dee Estuary, the Severn Estuary, and Dyfi Estuary Biosphere Reserve, the Forth, the Solway and Moray Firths, and in Northern Ireland the Harbour Forum has initiated a programme of projects in Belfast Lough.</li> <li>■ A substantial research programme underway at the Ythan Estuary in Grampian designed to develop a land management strategy to reduce eutrophication in the estuary.</li> <li>■ Work on course to develop and monitor estuary management plans to ensure the needs of estuarine fauna and flora are recognised. English Nature confident that target of 27 estuary plans will be met, as by September 1995, 13 draft plans had been produced. At least 29 estuaries have plans which are either complete or in preparation as at end March 1996.</li> <li>■ SNHs Focus on Firths project pioneered involvement of relevant interest in development of management strategies and interpreting the natural heritage interest of a number of Scotland's main estuaries.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The overall target is to ensure plans are in place for 50% of estuaries by the year 2000 (covering 80% of the estuarine area). The management plan for Strangford Lough is on course for completion by 1997.</li> <li>■ Focus on Firths will conclude agreed management strategies linked to a GIS management system for The Moray Firth, the Firth of Forth and the Solway Firth. Project will begin work on the Tay Estuary in 1996/97.</li> </ul>
13	<p><i>Promote the preparation of coastal zone management plans where required, following consultation on coastal policy discussion papers for England and Wales, stressing, among other things, the importance of conserving and enhancing biodiversity. issue a separate Scottish Consultation Paper covering coastal issues in due course.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The National Coastal Forum has been set up to bring together major groups with an interest in coastal management.</li> <li>■ National coastal policy guidelines published together with a review of coastal byelaws and production of guidance on best practice in coastal management.</li> <li>■ The European Commission issued communication on promotion of coastal zone management within the EU, including a proposal for a series of community-wide demonstration projects, in October 1995.</li> <li>■ The CCW is about to publish its Maritime Policy document following extensive public consultation.</li> <li>■ Government in Northern Ireland issued consultation paper on Coastal Zone Management and is considering the responses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The best practice guide on coastal zone management to be made available in the Spring 1996 to provide advice to local authorities and other; about circumstances where plans are needed, their relationship to other planning and management in the coastal zone, and the most effective means to draw up and implement such plans.</li> <li>■ Scottish Office published <i>Scotland's Coast - A discussion paper</i> in March 1996, inviting views on the future management of the Scottish Coast.</li> </ul>
14	<p><i>Undertake further research to assess the scope for enhancing sea defence and habitat creation through managed set back of the coast, linking research projects around long scale trials.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Site for full scale trial by MAFF and English Nature acquired, baseline surveys completed, experiments set up and existing sea wall breached in August 1995.</li> <li>■ Monitoring of other sites under the MAFF Habitat Scheme carried out using parallel techniques.</li> <li>■ Four Habitat Scheme (Saltmarsh option) agreements have been signed covering around 60 hectares of land. A number of other sites are under consideration with the full involvement of land owners, NRA and English Nature.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ There will be continued monitoring of the development of the full scale trial experimental site and the adjacent area. An interim report will be produced in 1996/97.</li> <li>■ Research into saltmarshes will provide information on improved management which will benefit flora and fauna as well as flood defence.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
15	<i>Utilise Voluntary and Statutory Marine Reserves and other related initiatives as mechanisms to involve individuals and communities in practical marine conservation work.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ English Nature recently established a voluntary reserve grant scheme to promote active involvement of individuals and communities in practical marine conservation work. £150,000 made available in 1994/97. Scottish Natural Heritage encouraging voluntary approach through promotion of SEASEARCH.</li> <li>■ English Nature manages one statutory MNR at Lundy; the Countryside Council for Wales manages one statutory MNR at Skomer, and has proposed a second at Menai Strait; Scottish Natural Heritage supports the voluntary MNR at St Abb's Head, and the Environment Service in Northern Ireland manages Strangford Lough in conjunction with the Strangford Lough Management Committee.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Government recognises the importance of the marine environment, and is committed to designating more statutory MNRs where this would be productive.</li> <li>■ Work with local communities will continue in order to conserve important marine areas.</li> </ul>
16	<i>Encourage local planning authorities to make reasonable provision for Local, Nature Reserves and natural green space in local plans and environmental charters.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Planning Policy Guidance 9 advises local planning authorities in England on locally important nature conservation sites and local nature reserves.</li> <li>■ Many sites of local nature conservation importance are given recognition by local authorities and by local conservation organisations.</li> <li>■ Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) may be established by local authorities under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.</li> <li>■ More detailed planning guidance on natural heritage designations is being issued to planning authorities and other relevant bodies for action in Scotland.</li> <li>■ Planning Policy Guidance 17 on Sport and Recreation provides advice to local planning authorities in England and Wales on the role of the planning system in safeguarding open space, and provides illustrative material to help authorities formulate local standards for publicly accessible open space.</li> <li>■ In Wales draft 'Planning Policy Guidance (Wales)' was issued for consultation in 1995.</li> <li>■ In Scotland a draft NPPG on Sport and Physical Recreation was issued for consultation in 1995.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Support and encouragement will continue for local authorities through the provision of information, data, advice or grant aid to wardens.</li> <li>■ The Government has commissioned research into the effectiveness of PPG17, in association with the Sports Council.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
17	<p><i>Continue to support voluntary sector initiatives aimed at enhancing the conservation value of urban and urban fringe land, for example continued support to the Groundwork Trust Movement enabling more urban trusts to be established, and to the Royal Society for Nature Conservation to enable it to extend its "Environment City" scheme in cooperation with local authorities. In Scotland continue Scottish Natural Heritage's Countryside Around Towns programme to enhance the value of degraded land and continue to underpin UK2000 Scotland's role in forging partnerships between private, voluntary and public sectors for environmental purposes</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Network of Groundworks Trusts in England and Wales provides a means of delivering local environment improvement through partnership and contributing to restoration of derelict land, the conservation and provision of new habitats and the management of public access.</li> <li>■ National and local support for Groundwork Trusts. Rural Action, Community Forests and Parish Paths Partnership, as well as for voluntary bodies such as Sustrano and BTCV which operate in countryside close to urban areas.</li> <li>■ The work of the Black Country Urban Forestry Unit has been significant. The National Urban Forestry Unit established in July 1995 to disseminate good practice in planting and management of urban trees and woodlands.</li> <li>■ English Nature has channelled £700,000 during the last three years into urban based community projects developed by local groups, voluntary bodies and local authorities.</li> <li>■ The Countryside Commission continues to grant aid over 100 local authority Countryside Management Projects, co-ordinating action from local voluntary bodies, community groups, businesses and landowners. Majority operate in urban fringes and improve landscape and biodiversity of the area.</li> <li>■ Environment Wales distributes about £500,000 per annum to voluntary organisations across Wales to support a wide range of environmental projects. Administered for the Welsh Office by the voluntary sector core partners are the Prince of Wales's Committee, CSV (Wales), BCTV (Wales). Groundwork CYMRU. Keep Wales Tidy Campaign and the Wildlife Trust Wales. CCW grant aid to the Groundwork Trusts in Wales totalled £225K in 1994/95. A further £1.1m grant aid was allocated to countryside management projects run by local authorities and others over the same period.</li> <li>■ Scottish Natural Heritage supports a wide range of projects of schemes to enhance the natural heritage through its Environmental Community Chest, the Grounds for Learning School improvement Scheme and the Countryside Around Towns network</li> <li>■ In Northern Ireland grants are available to support conservation projects initiated by community and voluntary groups.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Support will be ongoing.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
18	<i>Continue to support further "Greening" of the CAP while recognising the need to work within the framework of the reformed CAP, press for closer linkage between agricultural and environmental policies and objectives.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Environmental conditions applied to set-aside land and introduced into the main CAP livestock support schemes to discourage over grazing and unsuitable supplementary feeding practices.</li> <li>■ As a result of UK pressure the Council of Ministers agreed arable land taken out of production under certain agri-environment and forestry schemes be eligible to count towards farmers' set-aside requirements.</li> <li>■ MAFF's CAP Review Group reported its findings in July 1995. The group proposed the progressive removal of production-linked support and the introduction of policies to address socio- structural and environmental objectives.</li> <li>■ Collaborative research begun on environmental effects of the 1992 CAP Reforms. Joint Anglo- Dutch study on scope for using cross compliance in EU commodity regimes published in October 1995.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Government to continue to press for further reductions in production-related support and for a higher proportion of EC expenditure on direct payments to farmers to encourage environmentally beneficial and sustainable farming.</li> </ul>
19	<i>Continue to monitor existing financial incentives to encourage environmentally sensitive forms of agricultural to ensure they are having positive effects on the habitats and landscapes targeted and are thus contributing to biodiversity objectives. Tailor new incentive schemes planned under the agri-environment programme to complement existing schemes and keep under review.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Environmental monitoring programmes established for the main agri-environment schemes.</li> <li>■ Public consultation in May/June 1995 on future development of Countryside Stewardship and how better to integrate and focus environmental land management schemes in England.</li> <li>■ Extra £5m available for Countryside Stewardship 96/97 and a further £5m 97/98.</li> <li>■ In Wales, Tir Cymen will continue to be run by CCW as an experiment until end 1997. Welsh Office will then review the future of the project.</li> <li>■ In Scotland, consultation is underway on a new Countryside Premium Scheme which will include establishment of local environmental objectives.</li> <li>■ In Northern Ireland, an M&amp;E plan put in place to provide baseline biological and landscape monitoring and two new agri-environment schemes to apply to habitats outside the existing five ESAs.</li> <li>■ In England, a National Agri Environment Steering Group established to advise on all environmental land management schemes.</li> <li>■ In England, a National Forum established to help inform Government thinking.</li> <li>■ Regional consultation arrangements on the operation of environmental land management schemes put in place in each MAFF region.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Government will continue to monitor agri-environment schemes.</li> <li>■ CCW will continue to monitor the environmental and economic impact of Tir Cymen up to 1998 and will continue to monitor compliance up to completion of 10 year agreements.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
20	<i>Enforce strictly regulations controlling the use and storage of environmentally damaging pesticides and fertilizers, if necessary introducing new measures.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ MAFF, HSE and local authorities enforce controls on pesticides through regular inspection of farms and retail premises.</li> <li>■ English Nature acts as the lead agency in carrying out research to underpin advice on the environmental effects of pesticides, including problems of pesticide drift.</li> <li>■ English Nature is assessing effectiveness of buffer strips along rivers as means of reducing effects of drift or' run-off of fertilisers, and working with MAFF to promote creation of waterside fringes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Government to maintain regular and rigorous enforcement controls on pesticides.</li> </ul>
21	<i>Support organic farming and encourage more extensive livestock farming in selected areas.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Organic aid schemes launched giving direct financial support to farmers who convert to organic methods.</li> <li>■ Organic research in MAFF addresses economics and agronomics of conversion, and the environmental impact of organic farming. MAFF research programme also addresses issues related to extensive livestock farming.</li> <li>■ MAFF funds the UK Register of Organic Food Standards (UKROFS).</li> <li>■ Grants for marketing feasibility studies and hosting organic marketing seminar and think tank in England.</li> <li>■ New free advice scheme for organic farming launched in England.</li> <li>■ Increased payments and more flexible conditions announced to encourage uptake of Moorland Scheme in England.</li> <li>■ ESAs support extensive livestock farming in 9 upland areas of England.</li> <li>■ 100,000 ha of land managed under Countryside Stewardship receives no pesticides or artificial fertilisers. Scheme expanded to include old meadow and pasture land on acid and neutral soils throughout lowland England.</li> <li>■ CCW, in partnership with ADAS, DBRW and the National Trust has supported the development of an organic hill livestock unit at ADAS Pwllpeiran to research techniques and provide a demonstration unit.</li> <li>■ In Scotland, SOAEFD together with SNH initiated a demonstration project to encourage extensive grazing on areas of high nature conservation interest: the development of the heather moorland extensification scheme, and research into the influence of grazing in the uplands.</li> <li>■ In Northern Ireland, Moorland Scheme, covering sheep extensification outside of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Support for organic farming and encouragement of more extensive livestock farming in selected areas to continue.</li> <li>■ CCW, in partnership with others, have submitted an application for 5b funding to develop the organic hill livestock unit at Pwllpeiran to promote organic livestock marketing opportunities in rural Wales.</li> <li>■ DANI to undertake a review of support arrangements for organic farming in Northern Ireland.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
22	<i>Expand government research on environmental management, and continue support and advice to farmers to help them to identify and adopt environmentally beneficial management practices, which will conserve and where practicable, enhance wildlife habitats on their land.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ New research on conservation of farmland birds, establishment and management of farm hedges, and effects of grazing management on upland vegetation.</li> <li>■ Joint MAFF, SOAEFD, DOE and NERC programme to follow up Countryside Survey 1990.</li> <li>■ Countryside Commission provided financial support for Countryside Stewardship, Countryside Management projects, heritage coast advisory services, community forest teams, rural action and other local advisory networks.</li> <li>■ Conservation agencies commissioned research on impacts of habitat management on wildlife. eg effectiveness of field margins, conservation headlands and heathland management.</li> <li>■ Extra Government funding agreed for FWAG in England.</li> <li>■ CCW, ADAS, Forestry Authority and the Welsh National Parks jointly established CAIS in 1995 as a 'first stop shop' conservation advisory service for farmers throughout Wales.</li> <li>■ The Centre for Environment and Business in Scotland (CEBIS) meets the growing demand for environmental information for both small and large business concerns and from business advisers. CEBIS, supported by Scottish Enterprise, was the springboard for the development of the institute of Environmental Management (IEM), which, as a UK-wide organisation providing professional accreditation in Environmental Management through its Associateship programme, is raising the quality of environmental management in industry and commerce.</li> <li>■ In Northern Ireland, DANI provides a range of advisory services to encourage farmers to adopt environmentally beneficial farming practices.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ MAFF to seek specific proposals for further research into biodiversity.</li> <li>■ MAFF's research programme on environmental management for conservation to be kept under review to meet the needs of schemes such as ESAs, the Habitat Scheme and Countryside Stewardship.</li> <li>■ DOE to publish results of surveys on changes in key habitats in England and on ponds.</li> <li>■ SNH's Targeted Inputs for a Better Rural Environment (TIBRE) Project to encourage adoption of new technological applications to reduce environmental impact of agricultural operations.</li> <li>■ English Nature to contribute through their Whole Farms Plans Project and through research into environmental management</li> <li>■ DANI to pursue initiatives to encourage farmers to reduce usage of phosphates in view of development risk of eutrophication of NI waters.</li> <li>■ DANIs research programme on environmental management for conservation to be kept under review to meet the need of Agri-environment scheme and to respond to development problem of agricultural source nutrient enrichment of water particularly from phosphates.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
23	<i>Continue to support measures for hedgerow management and restoration for England and Wales.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Hedgerow Renovation Scheme administered by the Countryside Council for Wales. 184,000m brought into management and a further 728,000m retained under agreements up to end March 1995.</li> <li>■ Hedgerow Incentive Scheme merged with Countryside Stewardship in 1994 allowing broader and more flexible hedgerow planting and management agreements.</li> <li>■ 1,548 km of hedgerow restoration agreed over 10 years from 1994, in addition to 1,483km restoration agreed in 1992/3.</li> <li>■ Additional resources found to expand full range of Stewardship options, including grants to plant and restore hedgerows, after scheme transferred to MAFF in April 1996.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Support will be ongoing.</li> </ul>
24	<i>implement the Biodiversity aspects of the UK Sustainable Forest Programme.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ FC launched Forestry Authority Biodiversity initiative (FABI) to develop biodiversity standards managed forests and integrated methods of forest design planning.</li> <li>■ FC began Biodiversity Research Programme (BRP), part of FABI in April 1995 including ecological site classification, biodiversity monitoring and invertebrate biodiversity.</li> <li>■ EN and SNH promoting restoration of semi-natural vegetation on sites converted to plantations.</li> <li>■ CCW and EN maintain and update ancient woodlands inventories.</li> <li>■ In Northern Ireland, DANI Electricity established biodiversity enrichment project under high tension powerlines at Somerset Forest, Co Londonderry.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ FC Biodiversity Guidelines to be published in 1997.</li> <li>■ FC Bulletin on Creating New Native Woodlands, provides ecological basis for establishing biologically diverse native woodlands on appropriate sites. Continue training courses to promote this approach.</li> <li>■ Continue to promote restoration to semi-natural woodland from plantations on ancient sites where high cost-benefits are expected.</li> <li>■ Research on impact of forestry practices on biodiversity and impacts of deer on woodland to be published in next two years.</li> <li>■ CCW proposes to launch a grant scheme for orchards, parkland and hedgerow trees in 1996/97.</li> </ul>



Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
25	<i>Continue to protect ancient semi-natural woodland and encourage forms of management which conserve their special characteristics.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ FC published guides on management of semi-natural woodlands and followed up with training courses.</li> <li>■ Caledonian Pinewood inventory completed in 1995.</li> <li>■ Agencies contribute to conservation management of ancient semi-natural woodland financing a variety of projects.</li> <li>■ During 1992-94 Coed Cymru brought a total of 1.453ha of broadleaved woodland into management and aided 341 ha of new planting</li> <li>■ In Northern Ireland, two ancient woodlands (Banagher and Crom) have been designated as ASSIs, and management plans for Woodland Nature Reserves being reviewed on a 5 yearly cycle.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ All qualifying woodlands in Northern Ireland to be declared ASSIs by 2001.</li> <li>■ Research to be undertaken. Grant aid to be targeted to support multi-purpose and environmentally-sensitive management of existing ancient woodland eg new Woodland improvement Grant.</li> </ul>
26	<i>Continued to encourage the regeneration of woodland</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ FC's Woodland Grant Scheme aimed at further encouraging regeneration of woodlands with grants for replanting, natural regeneration and their continuing management.</li> <li>■ FC approved grant applications for 5,500 ha of regeneration of native broadleaved woodlands in 1994/95.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To continue encouraging sensitive regeneration of woodland to maximise benefits to conservation and biodiversity.</li> </ul>
27	<i>Encourage the restructuring of even-aged plantations to create more varied forest with a mixture of types and ages of trees, including the implementation of forest design plans in State Forests.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The work under FABI (see step 24) addresses this.</li> <li>■ Work begun on incorporating landscape ecology principles into forest design.</li> <li>■ Over 300,000 ha of Forest Enterprise Forest Design Plans (FDPs) for FC forests now prepared and approved following consultation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ To develop forest design planning advice.</li> <li>■ Implementation of FDPs proceeding and further FDPs to be assessed during 1996.</li> </ul>
28	<i>Continue to encourage a steady expansion of woodland and forest cover.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Over 18,000 ha of new woodland grant-aided by FC in 1994/95 including nearly 10,000 ha of new broadleaved woodlands with native species.</li> <li>■ Woodland Grant Scheme provides grant aid to land managers who wish to create new woodlands and forest in accordance with the Forestry Commission's and DANI's environmental guidelines. Grants also provided for short rotation coppice for energy and other industrial uses.</li> <li>■ The linked Farm Woodland Premium Scheme encourages creation of new woodlands on farms.</li> <li>■ Development of Indicative Forestry Strategies to continue to encourage expansion of woodland cover.</li> <li>■ CCW has commissioned a research study on 'Upland Woodlands in Wales' identifying the scope for expanding broadleaf woodland cover on farms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Continue to encourage expansion of woodland cover through FC grant schemes and DANI's Woodland Grant Scheme in ways which maintain and enhance biodiversity.</li> <li>■ Agricultural Departments to review Farm Woodland Premium Scheme to consider whether and in what form the scheme to be open to new applicants after 31 March 1997.</li> <li>■ CCW reviewing opportunities to promote broadleaf woodland expansion in Wales to meet Rural White Paper target.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
29	<i>Encourage the extension and creation of native woodlands, including extending the area of Forestry Commission Caledonian Forest (native pine and broad-leaved)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Over 3,000 ha of new native pinewoods, including pine and native broadleaves, grant-aided in 1994/95.</li> <li>■ Provision in new Woodland Grant Scheme allows establishment of new native woodlands at lower tree densities than required in other types of woodland.</li> <li>■ FC Bulletin provides technical advice on methods of creating and extending native woodland including pine forests.</li> <li>■ FC Caledonian Forest Programme will double the area of native pinewood on Forestry Commission land from under 3,000 ha to 6,000 ha.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ FC and conservation agencies to encourage use of native tree species in forestry programmes through initiatives and joint initiatives and projects such as Highland Birchwoods and the Millennium Forest.</li> </ul>
30	<i>Support the creation of community woodlands near population centres.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Community Woodland Supplement (CWS) available to land owners and land managers wishing to plant new woodland close to towns and cities where public access on foot welcome.</li> <li>■ FC grant-aided over 1,000ha of new community woodlands in 1994-95.</li> <li>■ In England, the Countryside Commission in partnership with the Forestry Commission and Local Authorities establishing 12 Community Forests on fringes of major urban areas. The whole programme now moved into implementation.</li> <li>■ Localisation Supplement (LS) introduced in 1995 provides additional funds to stimulate creation of multi-purpose woodlands in the Central Scotland Woodland initiative Area, the 12 English Community Forests, the Sherwood initiative Area and the Aman Gwendraeth initiative in Wales.</li> <li>■ In Wales, strategic planning for community woodland development concluded and in Northern Ireland, the Forest of Belfast project encouraging development of a number of community woodlands initiatives around the city.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Support will continue for these initiatives and ways examined to realise potential benefits for biodiversity.</li> </ul>
31	<i>Support the creation of a new National Forest in the English Midlands, and the creation of a multi-purpose woodlands in Scotland's central belt through the Central Scotland Woodlands initiative.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The National Forest Tender Scheme (NFTS) launched in 1995 to invite tenders for creation of new woodlands within the National Forest.</li> <li>■ The Central Scotland Woodlands Initiative boosted by the introduction of Locational Supplement. The Government endorsed the strategy prepared by the Central Scotland Countryside Trust, which leads or manages the Initiative, for the creation of a Central Scotland Forest.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Support will be ongoing.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
32	<p><i>Continue to encourage urban tree planting and care through research, support to voluntary organisation, and urban regeneration initiatives.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ DOE provided substantial support for research into cost effective establishment, care and management of urban trees. Recent publications include case study report of selected urban trees strategies, handbook on diagnoses of ill health in trees and structural failure analysis. Work in hand on assessment and management of hazardous trees and plant quality index as indicator of future survival and growth potential of young trees.</li> <li>■ Significant support for urban tree planting through grants and initiatives and support for voluntary bodies. The Action for London's Tree initiative, operated by the Countryside Commission, helps co- ordinate survey, management and awareness for the capital's trees.</li> <li>■ The National Urban Forestry Unit established in July 1995 to disseminate good practice (DOE to provide three years of core funding and also support from the Countryside Commission).</li> <li>■ The Highways Agency instigated research project to investigate establishment of urban street trees. Results expected in late 1996</li> <li>■ The Forestry Commission Research Division supports establishment of trees and woodland in urban areas through the Woodland Grant Scheme and research on the establishment of woodlands in urban area and on land reclaimed from industrial use.</li> <li>■ In Scotland, the Scottish Enterprise Network funds and supports a wide range of initiatives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Support and encouragement to continue to be given to urban tree planting and care through these measures.</li> </ul>
33	<p><i>Prepare plans for threatened species in priority order: globally threatened, threatened endemics; other threatened species listed in the relevant schedules and annexes to UK and EC legislation and international agreements to which the UK is a party; endangered and vulnerable species listed in Red Data Books, aiming to complete and put into implementation plans for at least 90% of the present known globally threatened endemic species within the next ten years.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ This work has been taken forward by the UK Steering Group and is explained in Chapter 2 of <i>Meeting the Rio Challenge</i>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The programme for completing and implementing outstanding species action plans is explained in the section on Implementation in this response.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
34	<i>Continue English Nature's species recovery programme by adding at least 5 new species per year.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ English Nature's Programme commenced in 1991. Has met the initial recovery objectives for 14 species, and has 36 species in its current programme.</li> <li>■ A total of £1,908m has been allocated to this programme since 1991.</li> <li>■ Scottish Natural Heritage launched its Species Action Programme in July 1995 with recovery work on 17 species.</li> <li>■ The Countryside Council for Wales has re-introduced the sand lizard and natterjack toad to Wales. Red Kite protection continues to ensure the expansion of the native Welsh population.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ English Nature plans to add at least another 10 species to its Recovery Programme.</li> <li>■ Priorities for the future include monitoring re-established populations, checking progress and refining management techniques.</li> <li>■ SNH aims to increase the numbers of species in its Action Programme by 10 in 1996/97.</li> </ul>
35	<i>Establish priorities for Red Data Books for the main taxonomic groups without them.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Red Data Books currently in preparation in both Great Britain and Ireland for higher plants (revision of existing book), bryophytes and lichens. Red Data Lists for these books being drawn up using recently revised IUCN threat categories.</li> <li>■ Reviews of fungi and invertebrates are under consideration.</li> <li>■ A Charophyte Red Data Book for Britain and Ireland was published in Spring 1994.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Work on this will continue.</li> </ul>
36	<i>Update and publicise guidelines on translocations, re- establishments, introductions and re- stocking.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The statutory nature conservation agencies provide advice and information to Government departments on licence applications for release of non-native species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act.</li> <li>■ A study of species, translocations, re-establishments, introductions and re-stocking commissioned and completed, and consideration being given to methods of raising public awareness of introduced species through publication and dissemination of information.</li> <li>■ An inter-agency working group has initiated a review of Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The species translocation study will be published by JNCC. An inter-agency working group will be charged with drafting national policy and guidelines by 1997.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
37	<p><i>Review microbial (and possibly botanically and animal) genetic resources, and then consider whether to develop a formalised strategy for future ex-situ conservation across all genetic resources taking account of international obligations and development in this field.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Office of Science and Technology is examining in detail the recommendations of an independent review of the UK's publicly funded microbial culture collections undertaken in 1994.</li> <li>■ The UK Systematics Forum published its <i>Review of 1994/95</i> in October 1995 and produced a preliminary report on <i>Priorities in Systematics Research and Training</i>.</li> <li>■ MAFF and SOAEFD currently carrying out a review of genetic resources relating to plant collections and identified major collections of genetic materials.</li> <li>■ The CCW has a completed programme of research on conservation genetics, focussing on scarce vascular plants. They are sponsoring a studentship on the Snowdon lily. Proceedings of a symposium on genetic conservation will be published by the JNCC in 1996.</li> <li>■ The Scottish Office, through R&amp;D programmes, support major genetic resources in the Commonwealth Potato Collection and the Rubus barley collections and support the Royal Botanical Garden, Edinburgh with their major collections of non-indigenous plants, and the conifer conservation project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ When approved, new arrangements for the UK's publicly funded microbial culture collections to be implemented.</li> <li>■ OST providing further three year's funding to the Systematics Forum beginning in April 1995. This will enable it to focus on devising a national strategy on priorities for systematics research.</li> <li>■ OST to explore integration of the Forum into an existing learned society so that links built within the systematics community are maintained.</li> </ul>
38	<p><i>Continue to have regard to the need to conserve marine fauna and flora in carrying out the Government's duty to regulate fisheries.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Environment Act 1995 gave Sea Fisheries Committee (SFCs) and other fisheries regulation the power to control fisheries for marine environmental as well as fisheries management purposes.</li> <li>■ The Act also allows appointments to SFCs of members with environmental expertise.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Government will continue to have regard to the conservation of marine flora and fauna in the regulation of fisheries.</li> </ul>
39	<p><i>Seek to control levels of fishing effort in the UK fleet by to package of measures to reduce capacity (e.g decommissioning) and fishing activity (e.g. restrictions on days spent at sea).</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Three decommissioning schemes in 1993/95 removed 6.8% of fleet capacity.</li> <li>■ The judgement of the European Court of Justice endorsed the legality of the days at sea policy adopted by Parliament in 1993. However Ministers have decided not to implement the planned arrangements, which were based on levels of fishing in 1991 .</li> <li>■ In Northern Ireland, some £0.5m has been made available for the 1995/96 NI scheme for vessels targeting nephrops.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Additional decommissioning schemes totalling £24m will run in 1996/97 and 1997/98.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
40	<i>Ensure that fisheries research continues to provide: effective understanding of the natural processes that control the production and survival of fish and shell fish larvae; the means of making accurate and timely assessments of fish stock numbers; assessment of topical issues such as the inter-action between towed gear and the sea bed and by-catches.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Government's extensive fisheries research programmes have continued to focus on these areas.</li> <li>■ The statutory nature conservation agencies fund work through the Marine Fisheries Task Group on impacts of cockle-dredging on non-target species; the effects of static gear; the level of fish stocks consumed by predators and in drafting freshwater fishery management guidelines with the NRA.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The research programmes to be kept under review to take account of biodiversity objectives.</li> </ul>
41	<i>Draw up priority action statements to guide UK implementation of the new agreements on European Bats and small cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Priority action statements included in UK's report to first meeting of the Parties to the ASCOBANS (Bonn Convention) held in Stockholm in 1994, and first meeting of the parties to the Bats Agreement (Bonn Convention) held in Bristol in 1995.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Implementation of the action statements to be monitored at both national and international (Advisory Committee) meetings.</li> </ul>
42	<i>Continue to give legal protection to threatened species, and prohibit both the persecution of protected species and the use of illegal means of killing/taking.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Government ensures that the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act are met, maintaining the licensing system under this Act. the Deer Act 1991 and the Protection of Badgers Act 1992.</li> <li>■ The Government ensures that the terms of The Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 are met, maintaining the licensing system under this legislation.</li> <li>■ Licenses are issued by licensing departments, or by the statutory nature conservation agencies for otherwise unlawful activities where both the applicants and the work proposed are acceptable in terms of their conservation and science, and meet high standards of competence and necessity.</li> <li>■ In 1994, 835 incidents were investigated by ADAS under the wildlife incidents investigations scheme, of which 211 were related to pesticides. 78 were referred to MAFF for formal investigation and three successful prosecutions ensued.</li> <li>■ The campaign against illegal poisoning has been promoted.</li> <li>■ The JNCC advised by an inter-agency group initiated the third Quinquennial Review of Schedules 5 and 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. A review of the schedules of The Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 also initiated by DOE(NI).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ MAFF to continue to investigate reports of suspected wildlife poisoning by pesticides, and take prosecution action whenever there is sufficient evidence.</li> <li>■ JNCC recommendations on the third Quinquennial review to be made to the DOE who will consult other departments before recommendations are made to Parliament on amending the Schedules. Proposed revisions in the schedules of the Northern Ireland legislation will go through a similar process.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
43	<i>Encourage voluntary bodies involved in tourism and heritage activities to raise funds for initiatives on the conservation of biological resources.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The conservation agencies collaborate with other organisations to promote environmentally sustainable tourism eg the Scottish Tourism Partnership to determine visitor management plans which incorporate the principles of conservation.</li> <li>■ Scottish Natural Heritage are working with the Scottish Wildlife Trust in reviewing management systems which support wildlife reserves, and the voluntary sector in contributing to the footpath resource e.g. the Scottish Mountaineering Trust using revenue gained from the sale of hill walking and climbing guidebooks.</li> <li>■ The Countryside Commission has introduced an advisory service to assist local tourism organisations to implement practical ways of raising money from visitors towards conservation. Six local schemes introduced, the most advanced is the Peak Tourism and Environment Fund.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ These initiatives are ongoing.</li> </ul>
44	<i>Encourage the tourism industry to include more information about the need for environmental conservation in its promotional literature, and to develop necessary skills to provide high quality information and interpretation, including information about local biodiversity.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Publication of <i>The Green Light - A Guide to Sustainable Tourism</i>; <i>Caravan Parks - caring for the Environment Going Green</i>; <i>Guidelines for the Tourist Industry</i>.</li> <li>■ The nature conservation agencies provide advice and information on the principles of good conservation practice through promotional literature and as input to management plans.</li> <li>■ The Rural Development Commission published <i>The Green Audit Kit</i> in March 1996. Contains practical environmental advice to tourism businesses, including role of visitor information in increasing conservation awareness.</li> <li>■ In the Lake District, a Tourism and Conservation Partnership scheme has been established. This provides a service to tourism businesses to enable them to improve the environmental content of promotional literature.</li> <li>■ Scottish Enterprise assist a number of tourism facilities that provide information and interpretation for visitors to Scotland.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ These initiatives are ongoing.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
45	<p><i>Consider a publicity strategy to explain the meaning and importance of biodiversity, and explain what needs to be done to conserve and enhance it. The campaign could: support initiatives that enhance people's understanding of what is special about their local environment; encourage the creation of a network of community wardens, support initiatives that promote local action to conserve local biodiversity.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ This has been addressed by the UK Steering Group, (see Chapter 4 of <i>Meeting the Rio Challenge</i>).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A forward programme of increasing public awareness and involvement and guidance in the preparation of Local Biodiversity Action Plans is explained in Annexes C and D of <i>Meeting the Rio Challenge</i>.</li> <li>■ Implementation of this programme is explained in this response.</li> </ul>
46	<p><i>incorporate environmental principles, including biodiversity, in their (Government and its Agencies) policies and programmes.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The principles underlying this action point are integral to the work of Government and its statutory nature conservation agencies.</li> <li>■ A research exercise, which evaluates the environmental content of a local plan has been carried out for the Scottish Office, Scottish Natural Heritage and Gordon District Council in 1995. This is intended as the basis for advice on best practice on the environmental appraisal of developmental plans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ These initiatives are ongoing.</li> </ul>
47	<p><i>Encourage where possible the adoption of agreed measures arising out of the Scottish Working Group Report "Learning for Life" and the adoption of measures proposed in the Toyne Report.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ In June 1995, the Secretary of State for Scotland published <i>A Scottish Strategy for Environmental Education</i> a statement of intent commending <i>Learning for Life</i> as the basis for his strategy on environmental education. The Secretary of State's Advisory Group on sustainable development now includes in its remit bringing together environmental education and sustainable development. SNH is taking forward many of the Learning for Life recommendations in its Environmental Education Initiatives.</li> <li>■ The Department for Education and Employment and the Welsh Office have commended the 1993 Toyne Report as a basis for colleges and universities to review how the environment is treated within their curricula.</li> <li>■ DOE has approached Professor Toyne to commission a short survey of environmental education provision in FHE for England and Wales.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Support will be ongoing.</li> </ul>



Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
48	<i>Establish a Citizens Environment Network to carry the message to individuals throughout local communities.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Going For Green initiative aims to increase public awareness of the part their personal choice can play in delivering sustainable development and to enlist their support and commitment in the coming years.</li> <li>■ <i>Ideas into action for Local Agenda 21</i> is aimed at individuals and community groups ie actions to improve the local environment - its wildlife, footpaths, historic features and landscape.</li> <li>■ Other initiatives, including Environment Watch, Rural Action for the Environment and the Tree Council's Tree Warden Scheme, can provide support to local communities in managing and caring for the living world.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The establishment of local networks, or an environment forum, linked to Local Agenda 21, to generate support for local action on biodiversity, is one of the proposals contained in <i>Meeting the Rio Challenge</i>.</li> </ul>
49	<i>Promote a coordinated programme of research through the Government's environment agencies to include understanding of the impact of recreation of biodiversity and to develop visitor management techniques to reduce negative effects, eg the sustainable tourism project in Northern Ireland.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A guide to rural tourism - <i>Sustainable Rural Tourism - Opportunities for Local Action</i> - was published by the Countryside Commission in November 1995, on behalf of National Heritage, English Tourist Board and the Rural Development Commission. The guide is based on 21 local projects, the majority of which were part funded by the three agencies.</li> <li>■ The Pennine Way has long been associated with erosion. The Countryside Commission has introduced survey technique for monitoring changes in the physical condition of the route and the biodiversity of the habitats along the route. Used to develop management and maintenance strategies. As a result, the condition of the Pennine Way and its environs is being improved and sustained.</li> <li>■ The nature conservation agencies have continued to support research and action on the impact of recreation and tourism on the natural heritage, including terrestrial and marine environments. includes <i>Disturbance to Waterfowl on Estuaries; Recreation and the Natural Heritage - A Research Review</i>.</li> <li>■ The Environment Service joined with the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and with District Councils to prepare an environmental and visitor management strategy for the Mourne AONB.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Support will be on going.</li> </ul>
50	<i>improve the accessibility and coordination of existing biological datasets; provide common standards for future recording.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Work has been taken forward by the UK Steering Group. A forward programme for biological recording is explained in Chapter 6 of <i>Meeting the Rio Challenge</i>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ See the Government response.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
51	<i>Participate actively at all levels of the biodiversity convention.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="651 255 1086 584">■ The UK has been a central player in the negotiations to implement the Biodiversity Convention since Rio, particularly in advocating a sound scientific and financial basis for decision making and encouraging Parties to develop national strategies to protect biodiversity. The first Conference of the Parties and meeting of the scientific advisory body made good progress towards implementing the Convention and setting up the administrative machinery to operate it.</li> <li data-bbox="651 600 1086 808">■ The second Conference of the Parties in Jakarta in November 1995 dealt with more substantive issues. The Parties decided to start the negotiation of a biosafety protocol on the transboundary movement of living modified organisms. The first meeting to take this process forward will be in Aamus, Denmark in July 1996.</li> <li data-bbox="651 824 1086 1272">■ Other decisions included agreement on the importance of developing national strategies and in-situ conservation measures; the establishment of a three year scientific work programme on coastal and marine ecosystems; the start of a dialogue between the Convention and the Commission on Sustainable Development's intergovernmental Panel on Forests, and the setting up of a two year pilot phase of the clearing house mechanism to facilitate information exchange. No agreement was reached on voting on financial provisions or establishing the Global Environment Facility as the permanent funding mechanism. It remains as the interim mechanism.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1129 255 1444 801">■ The second meeting of the scientific advisory body will be held in Montreal in September 1996 and the third Conference of Parties will meet in Argentina in November 1996. The UK will be pressing for the GEF to be designated as a permanent funding mechanism, and for the financial issues to be decided by consensus. Other priorities will be seeking a comprehensive response from the COP to the CSD Forests Panel and encouraging action to monitor and identify the components of biodiversity to help countries take informed action.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
52	<p><i>Play an active part in developing effectively existing international conventions for nature conservation, particularly CITES, the Bern, Ramsar and Bonn Conventions and the specific agreements under the last of these.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Department of the Environment, supported by the JNCC, continues to play an active part in representing the Government on international conventions for nature conservation.</li> <li>■ The UK delegation supported proposals to strengthen the enforcement of the CITES Convention at its 9th full Conference in Fort Lauderdale in November 1994. Other initiatives include funding the secondment of an Enforcement Officer to the CITES Secretariat; holding a training seminar for European Enforcement Officers in October 1995; setting up a Working Group to tackle technical problems associated with the listing of timber species of CITES; chairing a meeting of 17 African Elephant Range States and others in Botswana (which led to South Africa withdrawing its proposal to resume trade in non-ivory products) collaboration between Tiger Range States to produce a resolution calling for greater cooperation to combat illegal trade; publication of a special leaflet in English and Chinese aimed at those running oriental pharmacies and a series of raids by the British Police on premises selling traditional oriental medicines.</li> <li>■ In June 1995, European Environment Ministers reached a common position on a new Wildlife Trade Regulation to replace the existing 1982 Regulation.</li> <li>■ DOE Ministers launched a new publicity campaign in June 1995 aimed at holiday and business travellers sponsored by AGFA. Over 30,000 CITES items are seized by customs each year. More than 90% of seizures are made from private individuals and the campaign aims to make people more aware of the controls.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The UK Government will continue to play an active role with the effective development of international conventions.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
53	<i>Play a full part in ensuring a sound scientific basis for conservation in Europe.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The UK is playing a full part in the work of the European Environment Agency (EEA) in producing comparable information across the EU in support of European Environmental Policy and that of Member States.</li> <li>■ JNCC and the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology form part of the Nature Conservation Topic Centre of the EEA and are working on the production of a European database to be made accessible through European information and Observation Network which the EEA is establishing.</li> <li>■ The DOE contributed to the United National Economic Commission on Europe (UNECE) Task Force developing an international system of environmental accounting.</li> <li>■ Pilot work completed on demonstrating a method for converting Land Cover Map of Great Britain to a CORINE standard.</li> <li>■ JNCC currently developing an EU Derogations information system funded by the European Commission to facilitate Europe-wide access to information on derogations granted under the European Directives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The UK Government will continue to play a full part in maintaining representation on a European level to ensure the inclusion of UK information and expertise in European initiatives.</li> </ul>
54	<i>Participate in the identification of sensitive areas at high risk from shipping.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Department of Transport has funded (jointly with the Health and Safety Executive and the UK Offshore Operators Association) a project to construct a database from which all identifiable ship routes across the UK continental shelf can be plotted.</li> <li>■ Establishment of Marine Environmental High Risk Areas (MEHRAs) is one of the principle recommendations of the Donaldson Report on the Prevention of Pollution from Merchant Shipping accepted by Government.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The JNCC will continue to identify suitable suites and will continue to develop sensitivity indices. A number of possible pilot projects leading to a detailed Sensitivity Atlas for the UK are under consideration although they are not restricted to the impacts of shipping.</li> </ul>
55	<i>Participate fully in the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans in the Baltic and North Seas (ASCOBANS) which will improve on an international scale measures for conservation management and research.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Department of the Environment lead the UK Delegation to the first Conference of the Parties in Stockholm in 1994.</li> <li>■ DOE, supported by JNCC, attends meetings of the Advisory Committee which discusses and reviews necessary actions. The Department also chairs regular meetings with OGDs and representatives of the voluntary sector to discuss measures for conserving small cetaceans.</li> <li>■ DOE, MAFF, SOAEFD, WO and the Sea Mammal Research Unit of Cambridge (funded by NERC) has sponsored research on sitings, strandings, acoustic disturbance and the impact of by-catch.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The UK Government will continue to take an active lead with the implementation of ASCOBANS.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
56	<i>Take full account of the EC Fifth Environmental Action Programme in respect of its implications for biodiversity.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ DOE has consulted widely within the UK, and has met with and received written comments from a wide range of businesses, NGOs and local authority organisations.</li> <li>■ The Commission is producing a progress report on the implementation of the Programme and a separate review document is also being produced.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The review provides a useful opportunity to give even greater emphasis to the need to integrate environmental considerations into policy making at all levels including all relevant parts of the Commission itself.</li> </ul>
57	<i>Assist the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources in countries otherwise unable to afford it and rich in biodiversity through the Darwin Initiative.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Since 1993, 116 biodiversity projects costings £20m have been funded under the Darwin initiative and early estimates of its achievements are encouraging. The initiative was launched by the Prime Minister at Rio in 1992 as an innovative way to help developing countries meet their commitments under the Biodiversity Convention. Darwin utilises UK biodiversity expertise in universities, research institutions, museums, botanic gardens and NGOs to collaborate with developing country scientists, government officials and others. Over 60 UK institutions have been involved ranging from traditional centres of expertise on biodiversity such as the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and the Natural History Museum to smaller organisations such as the international Centre for Conservation Education. The projects are linked to over 70 countries across four continents, including Brazil, Chile, Uganda, Malaysia and China. The subject range is also huge, including in-depth studies of one species such as <i>Porteresia coarctata</i> and broad examinations of threatened ecosystems in order to make appropriate management plan proposals.</li> <li>■ The first projects, started in 1993, are mostly due to end this year. Early estimates for the measurable outputs are encouraging. Almost 600 host country participants will have received training, ranging from formal MSc level courses to short courses or on-the-job training. 30 papers with sustainable management recommendations will have been delivered to Government departments, national parks authorities or research institutions. 23 scientific papers will have been published in academic journals and 17 databases or surveys will have been established, including new ex-situ collections.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Government intends to fund the Darwin initiative at its present level of £3m a year to draw on the UK's scientific educational and commercial expertise to help countries rich in biodiversity but poor in resources to meet their obligations under the Biodiversity Convention.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
58	<p><i>Through the aid programme, support national development programmes in developing countries that aim at or involve the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity; and assist developing countries to take action to conserve biodiversity in the global interest through the Global Environmental Assistance programme.</i></p>	<p>■ The revised ODA Biodiversity Strategy, published in June 1994, continues the programme established in 1991 to promote biodiversity conservation. The Strategy reflects the provisions of the Convention and, to that end, encompasses bilateral and multilateral activity.</p> <p>Bilateral activity under the Strategy includes:–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Commissioning studies and research from UK institutions and NGOs on issues relating to priorities for biodiversity conservation, a methodology for developing long term biodiversity sustainability assessments, interim measures for conserving species under immediate threat and biodiversity perspectives in developing countries.</li> <li>■ Assisting nine selected target countries with biodiversity activities of national benefit, including training, education and research.</li> <li>■ Continuing to promote support for biodiversity projects throughout the bilateral programme -in 1994/95 ODA spent over £15m on projects wholly or partly concerned with biodiversity. Total current commitments to such projects under the aid programme stand at £48m.</li> <li>■ The publication of a strategy document on forestry which includes consideration of the importance of forest biodiversity.</li> </ul> <p>Multilateral activity includes:–</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The successful completion in March 94 of the restructuring of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), in part to meet the requirements of the Convention.</li> <li>■ The commitment of an additional £89.5m to the replenishment of the GEF, bringing our total commitment to £130m and meeting the UK obligation under the Convention to provide new and additional resources.</li> <li>■ Promoting the priority use of GEF funds for enabling activities to support national strategies, plans and programmes through active participation in the GEF Council in its development of an operational strategy. During the GEF pilot phase 57 projects in the biodiversity focal area were funded (total \$313m), and 305 biodiversity projects were funded under the Small Grants Programme (\$5m) Under GEF- I, 9 projects have been approved to date (\$65m).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The UK Government will continue to implement the biodiversity strategy through both bilateral and multi-lateral aid channels.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
59	<i>Encourage individual Dependent Territories to develop strategies for biodiversity conservation, including updating existing legislation and developing new legislation to protect species and habitats as appropriate.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Gibraltar, Jersey and St Helena and its dependencies have been included in the UK's ratification of the biodiversity convention. Their Governments have taken a number of steps to protect the biodiversity in their care, and a programme report was included at Annex B in the UK Steering Group Report <i>Meeting the Rio Challenge</i>.</li> <li>■ The Foreign and Commonwealth Office, in consultation with DOE, has been conducting a review of environmental activity in the Dependant Territories (DTs) which sought to identify ways in which HMG could help the DT Governments to develop a strategy for biodiversity conservation and to encourage them all to sign up to the Biodiversity Convention. This concluded that:– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● it was necessary to help the DTs to determine the extent of the biodiversity they should focus on as worth protecting including the identification of endemic or rare species;</li> <li>● a common problem was a lack of adequate environmental legislation. As the UK's ratification of the Convention is not extended to a Territory which does not have enabling legislation in place, this should be a high priority area for assistance; and</li> <li>● some DT Governments lack the necessary technical expertise to make a judgement of the relative advantages and disadvantages of taking on the obligations of the Convention. They may also lack the resources to enable them to develop a strategy for biodiversity conservation or to implement the Convention.</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ FCO Ministers therefore agreed that the UK should help dependent territories governments address these points both in the context of the Convention and wider environmental objectives. Progress to date is as follows:– <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● terms of reference being drawn up for a consultant to carry out a review of environmental legislation in the Caribbean Dependent Territories. This will involve reviewing existing legislation and providing assistance with updating legislation, providing model legislation or writing new legislation;</li> <li>● WWF in association with UK DTs Conservation Forum appointed to manage a project to conduct biodiversity surveys in the Caribbean DTs;</li> <li>● an assessment is being made of the biodiversity database requirements in the Caribbean DTs;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The Government welcomes and fully supports the work being undertaken in the Dependent Territories, as indicated in Annex B of the UK Steering Group Report. Matters are being successfully carried forward through joint action by the Government, the UK Dependent Territories Forum and bodies in the Dependent Territories. This has focused attention on the need for biodiversity conservation in the Dependent Territories and the Government's commitment to assist actions to fulfil that need, in consultation with Dependent Territories Governments.</li> </ul>

Step No	Broad Targets	Action to Date	Commitment to further action
59		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● work is in hand to assist the Attorney General in the Falkland islands who is giving priority to a revision of environmental legislation in 1995. The new legislation should be in place by 1996. With FCO funding the NGO, Falklands Conservation, has conducted several baseline surveys of the biodiversity in the Falklands Islands;</li> <li>● JNCC has commissioned biodiversity profiles for each of the DTs. These have been circulated to DT Governments for their comments. Revised text will be produced later this year;</li> <li>● a management plan has been produced for the environment on Henderson island in the Pitcairn Islands. The island Council has commented usefully on the proposal and we are now consulting with environmental groups in the UK on how best to implement the plan;</li> <li>● an expedition to the British Indian Territory in early 1996 will draw up a conservation plan for the territory.</li> <li>● two biodiversity surveys are being carried out in Hong Kong: one on terrestrial and fresh water habitats, the other on corals and fishes. The surveys will provide an up to date database for developing a strategy for biodiversity conservation in Hong Kong. In addition the Mai Po Marshes was listed as a Wetland of international importance under the Ramsar convention in November 1995. To give added protection to this important Wetland in February 1996, the Hong Kong Government enlarged the Restricted Area under the Wild Animals Protection Ordinance at this site from 336 hectares to 835 hectares to include the inter-tidal mud flats.</li> <li>■ The DTs are eligible for funding under the Darwin initiative. Two projects are being supported at present- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– support to conservation NGO in the DTs through the UK DTs Conservation Forum</li> <li>– a Kew Gardens training project to maintain rare and endangered plants.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



## **ANNEX B: CHAMPIONS AND CONTACT POINTS**

KEY SPECIES	COMMON NAME	CHAMPION	CONTACT POINT
<i>Arvicola terrestris</i>	water vole		EA
<i>Lepus europaeus</i>	brown hare		CCW
<i>Lutra lutra</i>	European otter		EA
<i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i>	dormouse		EN
<i>Myotis myotis</i>	greater mouse-eared bat		EN
<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>	harbour porpoise		SMRU
<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	pipistrelle bat		EN
<i>Rhinolophus ferrum equinum</i>	greater horseshoe bat		EN
<i>Sciurus vulgaris</i>	red squirrel		EN
<i>Acrocephalus paludicola</i>	aquatic warbler		CCW
<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	skylark		MAFF
<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>	bittern		EN
<i>Burhinus oedicnemus</i>	stone curlew		MAFF
<i>Crex crex</i>	corncrake		SOAEFD
<i>Loxia scotica</i>	scottish crossbill		SNH
<i>Perdix perdix</i>	grey partridge		MAFF
<i>Tetrao urogallus</i>	capercaille		SNH
<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	song thrush		EN
<i>Bufo calamita</i>	natterjack toad		EN
<i>Triturus cristatus</i>	great crested newt		EN
<i>Lacerta agilis</i>	sand lizard		EN
<i>Alosa alosa</i>	allis shad		MAFF
<i>Alosa fallax</i>	twait shad		MAFF
<i>Coregonus albula</i>	vendace		EA
<i>Coregonus autumnalis</i>	pollan		DANI/DOE(NI)
<i>Formica candica</i>	black bog ant		CCW
<i>Formica exsecta</i>	narrow-headed ant		SNH
<i>Formica pratensis</i>	black-backed meadow ant		EN
<i>Bombus sylvarum</i>	shrill carder bee		EN
<i>Aphodius niger</i>	a scarab beetle		EN
<i>Bembidion argentoleum</i>	a ground beetle		DOE(NI)
<i>Carabus intricatus</i>	blue ground beetle		EN
<i>Cathormiocerus brittanicus</i>	a weevil		EN
<i>Cryptocephalus coryli</i>	a leaf beetle		EN
<i>Cryptocephalus exiguus</i>	a leaf beetle		EN
<i>Limoniscus violaceus</i>	violet click beetle		EN
<i>Lucanus cervus</i>	stag beetle		EN
<i>Obera oculata</i>	a long horn beetle		EN
<i>Panagaeus crux major</i>	a ground beetle		CCW
<i>Stenus palposus</i>	a ground beetle		DOE(NI)
<i>Tachys edmondsi</i>	a ground beetle		EN
<i>Argynnis adippe</i>	high brown fritillary		EN
<i>Boloria euphrosyne</i>	pearl bordered fritillary		SNH
<i>Eurodryas aurinia</i>	marsh fritillary		CCW
<i>Hesperia comma</i>	silver spotted skipper		EN
<i>Lycaena dispar</i>	large copper butterfly		EN
<i>Maculinea arion</i>	large blue butterfly		EN
<i>Meliccta athalia</i>	heath fritillary		EN
<i>Gryllotalpa gryllotalpa</i>	mole cricket		EN
<i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i>	freshwater white-clawed crayfish		EA
<i>Coenagrion mercuriale</i>	southern damselfly		EA

KEY SPECIES	COMMON NAME	CHAMPION	CONTACT POINT
<i>Asilus crabroniformis</i>	a robber fly		CCW
<i>Callicera spinolae</i>	a hover fly		EN
<i>Chrysotoxum octomaculatum</i>	a hover fly		EN
<i>Anisus vorticulus</i>	a snail		EA
<i>Catinella arenaria</i>	sandbowl snail		EN
<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>	a freshwater pearl mussel		SNH
<i>Myxas glutinosa</i>	glutinous snail		EA
<i>Pisidium tenuilineatum</i>	a freshwater bivalve		EA
<i>Pseudanodonta complanata</i>	a freshwater mussel		EA
<i>Segmentina nitida</i>	a freshwater snail		EA
<i>Vertigo angustior</i>	a snail		CCW
<i>Vertigo genesii</i>	a snail		SNH
<i>Vertigo geyeri</i>	a snail		CCW
<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>	a snail		EN
<i>Coscinia cribraria</i>	speckled footman		EN
<i>Eustroma reticulata</i>	netted carpet		EN
<i>Idaea ochrata</i>	bright wave		EN
<i>Edwardsia ivelli</i>	sea anemone		EN
<i>Nematostella vectensis</i>	scarlet sea anemone		EN
<i>Hirudo medicinalis</i>	medicinal leech		SNH
<i>Battaraea phalloides</i>	a phalloid		EN
<i>Boletus satanas</i>	Devil's bolete		EN
<i>Poronia punctata</i>	nail fungus		EN
<i>Tulostoma niveum</i>	a stalked puffball		SNH
<i>Buellia asterella</i>	starry breck lichen		EN
<i>Caloplaca luteoalba</i>	orange fruited elm-lichen		EN
<i>Collema dichotomum</i>	river jelly lichen		EA
<i>Gyalecta ulmi</i>	Elm's gyalecta		RBGE
<i>Pseudocyphellaria aurata</i>	a lichen		RBGE
<i>Pseudocyphellaria norvegica</i>	a lichen		RBGE
<i>Schismatomma graphidioides</i>	a lichen		RBGE
<i>Jamesoniella undulifolia</i>	marsh earwort		SNH
<i>Lejeunea mandonii</i>	a liverwort		EN
<i>Lophozia (Lieocolea) rutheana</i>	Norfolk flapwort		EN
<i>Marsupella profunda</i>	western rustwort		EN
<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>	petalwort		CCW
<i>Buxbaumia viridis</i>	green shield moss		SNH
<i>Didymodon glaucus</i>	glaucous beard-moss		EN
<i>Ditrichum cornubicum</i>	Cornish path moss		EN
<i>Drepanocladus vernicosus</i>	slender green feather-moss		CCW
<i>Thamnobryum angustifolium</i>	Derbyshire feather-moss		EN
<i>Weissia multcapsularis</i>	a moss		EN
<i>Chara muscosa</i>	mossy stonewort		RBGE
<i>Alisma graminea</i>	ribbon-leaved water plantain		EA
<i>Apium repens</i>	creeping marshwort		EN
<i>Artemisia norvegica</i>	Norwegian mugwort		SNH
<i>Athyrium flexile</i>	Newman's lady-fern		SNH
<i>Cochlearia micacea</i>	mountain scurvy-grass		SNH
<i>Coincya wrightii</i>	Lundy cabbage		EN
<i>Cotoneaster cambricus</i>	wild cotoneaster		CCW
<i>Cypripedium calceolus</i>	Lady's slipper orchid		EN
<i>Damasonium alisma</i>	starfruit		EN
<i>Epipactis youngiana</i>	Youngs' helleborine		EN
<i>Euphrasia cambrica</i>	an eyebright		CCW

KEY SPECIES	COMMON NAME	CHAMPION	CONTACT POINT
<i>Euphrasia campbelliae</i>	an eyebright		RBGE
<i>Euphrasia heslop-harristonii</i>	an eyebright		RBGE
<i>Euphrasia rivularis</i>	an eyebright		CCW
<i>Euphrasia rotundifolia</i>	an eyebright		RBGE
<i>Euphrasia vigursii</i>	an eyebright		EN
<i>Fumaria occidentalis</i>	western ramping fumitory		EN
<i>Gentianella anglica</i>	early gentian		EN
<i>Liparis loeselii</i>	fen orchid		CCW
<i>Luronium natans</i>	floating water plantain		CCW
<i>Najas flexilis</i>	slender naiad		SNH
<i>Najas marina</i>	Holly-leaved naiad		EN
<i>Potamogeton rutilus</i>	Shetland pondweed		SNH
<i>Ranunculus tripartitus</i>	three-lobed water crowfoot		EN
<i>Rumex rupestris</i>	shore dock		EN
<i>Saxifraga hirculus</i>	yellow marsh saxifrage		SNH
<i>Trichomanes speciosum</i>	Killarney fern		CCW

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**KEY HABITATS**

Fens  
Mesotrophic Lakes  
Chalk Rivers  
Reedbeds  
Grazing marsh  
Cereal Field Margins  
Upland Oakwood  
Limestone Pavements  
Lowland Heathland  
Purple Moorgrass  
Rich Hedgerows  
Saline Lagoons  
Seagrass beds  
Native Pinewoods

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English Nature  
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food  
Forestry Commission  
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