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**JOINT NATURE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE**

**QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT – SECOND QUARTER, OCTOBER  
2001**

**Paper by Sue Bennett and Sue McQueen**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The attached paper provides information on our situation at the end of the second quarter in terms of finances, performance and staffing. Risk management information has not been collected this quarter, partially due to the developments to the risk register. The Appendices provide detailed information in support of the conclusions in the report.

**2. Financial report**

- 2.1 Overall, spend and commitment are at a good level for the midpoint of the year, with some 76% of our total £4.65m budget (including additional receipts) being spent or committed. This is considerably higher than the 68% spent or committed at this time last year and indicates that we are well on the way to a full spend. The spend on salaries is likely to be higher than predicted, partly because of the SNH pay award and partly because of the extra staff required to carry out the work programme and to work on the Quinquennial Review.
- 2.2 Additional funding was also required to meet the costs of opening the Brussels office in September and for some office reorganisation, necessary to accommodate additional staff
- 2.3 Additional receipts of £142,000 have been declared, all of which are earmarked for particular expenditure.

**3. Staffing report**

- 3.1 The number of permanent and FTA posts has risen by 14 (100 compared with 86) since the start of the year. A small number of these result from a planned full time post being split into 2 part time posts but some are additional to those planned through the corporate planning process. We are still running at around 89% staffing capacity. Time lost to vacancies (of which 84% relates new and restructured posts) equates to almost 6.5 posts. The amount of recruitment, whilst lower than last year (15 exercises/ 19 posts compared with 21/21) remains high. Total turnover is 11% compared with 14% last year although excluding casuals this reduces to 5%.

- 3.2 The above is likely to be reflecting the outcome of using retention measures for 'high risk' posts and the reduction in the proportion of FTA contracts. This is currently 24% of total staffing against 34% at this time last year and 40% the previous year.
- 3.3 The amount of sickness reported (including that relating to long-term sick absences) is still very low at around 2 days per staff member. This indicates that there may be under-reporting.

#### **4. Target performance reporting**

- 4.1 The attached appendix collates key and corporate target performance reports by corporate plan programme.
- 4.2 Progress against key targets:
  - i. The vast majority of key targets are reported as being on target at this stage in the year. There is some slippage in the Quinquennial review of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, although progress is being made to catch up;
  - ii. In addition, there is slippage in elements of 4 others (CITES service standards, Marine Habitats Accounts for Strategic Habitats Advice, some census work for Seabirds 2000 and some datasets for NBN). Achievement has been affected primarily by resource constraints and Foot & Mouth;
  - iii. The Natura 2000 target (key target 3) has been amended to coincide with the Service Level Agreement requirement to extend the project to March 2002.
- 4.3 Progress against corporate targets:
  - i. The need for additional work to consider emerging issues has led to slippage in 3 corporate targets (Land use policy, Marine Information and publishing JNCC's strategy);
  - ii. Delays in agreeing common standards guidance together with Foot and Mouth Disease have lead to slippage in one element of the Habitat information/ sampling framework target.
  - iii. The target for production of new GCR volumes has been reduced to five from eight as it became clear that the original target was unrealistic.

## APPENDIX: PERFORMANCE REPORTS

### 1. Global conservation advice

Key/ Corporate target no.	Project & Target no(s).	Project name(s)	Details	Report by
Key 1	5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 9.1, 38.1, 38.2, 38.3, 38.4, 38.5, 38.9, 28.all	International Agreements (an amalgam)	Provide scientific and technical support to UK negotiators for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Bonn Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Ramsar Convention on the Conservation of Wetlands of International Importance, the World Heritage Convention, the Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Natural Habitats and Species and any subsidiary Agreements, and the Oslo and Paris Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the north-east Atlantic (OSPAR), sufficient to maintain the effectiveness of negotiations and the reputation of the UK for high quality scientific input to international conventions.	Vin Fleming
<p><b>On track? Yes</b></p> <p><b>Details:</b></p> <p><b>Bern</b> a proposal has been made to include geological sites in the Emerald Network. The Icelandic Institute of Natural History drafted a report during the Summer with significant input from JNCC. The report recommends that the Bern Convention supports this type of conservation work but that a detailed review of how this might be achieved needs to be undertaken. DEFRA have asked for further support at meetings later this year.</p> <p><b>CBD</b> a strategy for the <u>full</u> implementation of the CBD has been prepared and submitted to Government; work on the CHm is dealt with under key target 11. We have been involved in some consultations in the lead up to SBBSTTA in November and have been developing ideas around one of the main themes (Forests) with DEFRA and FC members of the UK delegation.</p> <p><b>CITES</b> A CITES range state dialogue meeting on future management of Caribbean hawksbills was held in Mexico in May. The UK Scientific Authority was represented by the JNCC at a meeting on international trade in coral held in Jakarta in April. JNCC attended the 17<sup>th</sup> Animals Committee in Hanoi where significant issues included the ongoing work of the significant trade process (especially for sturgeon), periodic reviews of the appendices, changes to source codes and definitions. Work also continued on the coral working group chaired by JNCC. JNCC also attended the 20<sup>th</sup> meeting of the EC CITES Scientific Review Group. The latest editions of the four JNCC checklists were completed and, with the collaboration of the CITES secretariat, are currently being distributed to all 154 CITES Parties (and are available on the UK CITES web site), UK enforcement officials and UK OTs. Preliminary work on the UK basking shark proposal to CoP12 has commenced. We met with a delegation from the Government of the Cayman Islands to discuss their draft CITES legislation and the registration of captive breeding facilities; comments provided on draft legislation. Assistance provided to DEFRA into the specification and commissioning of research into exploitation of marine turtles in UK OTs</p> <p><b>CMS</b> Scientific Council meeting hosted in Edinburgh (May 2001), CAG (SNH) chair.</p> <p><b>ASCOBANS</b> a meeting of the ASCOBANS advisory committee was held in April. The meeting considered particularly harbour porpoise by catch and issues relating to the Baltic Sea, and agreed ways forward.</p>				

**AEWA** UK implementation plan for AEWA drafted and circulated for comment (by end October) to DEFRA and country agencies. The aim is then for external consultation (possibly involving meeting with NGOs) with the aim of finalising the plan by the end of 2001.

**EuroBats** *Habitat Management for Bats* published by JNCC and distributed to EuroBats secretariat

**MOU IOT** A meeting on the *Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles of the Indian Ocean* was held in Manila in June. A conservation and management plan was agreed at the meeting.

**OSPAR** 3rd Workshop on Marine Protected Areas in Sweden attended in June 2001 at which, *inter alia*, Guidelines for the Identification and Selection of Marine Protected Areas in the OSPAR Maritime Area were adopted.

**Ramsar** JNCC has been involved in preparations for the pan-European Ramsar meeting (to be held in Slovenia in October) and have agreed to give 3 presentations on various aspects of UK implementation of the Convention. This is an important lead-in to the next CoP in 2002. JNCC have also continued to act as UK focal point for the Convention's Scientific and Technical Review Panel and have provided comments on several papers which will go to the next Standing Committee meeting in December.

**WHC** JNCC provided support to UK delegation to World Heritage Committee Bureau meeting in June. The Devon/Dorset coast site has been nominated on scientific criteria and final decisions will be made in December. As part of JNCC's support for this work we have agreed in principle to chair a global consultation process to look at the existing and future role of geological/geomorphological sites on the WHL. UK was elected to the World Heritage Committee in October.

Key 2	5.1	CITES	Further the conservation of species threatened by international trade, as UK CITES Scientific Authority for Animals, by providing on-line advice to DETR on c. 21,000 CITES licence consultations to agreed service standards (95% response within 3 days)	Vin Fleming
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**On track? Yes** - for volume & quality of work / **No** for service standards

**Details:** The total number of import/(re-)export licenses and Article 10 certificates returned to DEFRA in the first half of 2001/02 is 12264 approx. Service Standard = c.55- 65% response within 3 working days. DEFRA let a contract during Q1 to look at the shortcomings of the existing bird registration system (BIRDLOG) and UNICORN and are putting together a business case for new licensing software that should resolve the current problems we have with the reporting function.

A new implementing regulation (1808/2001) came into force during Q2. We continue to have a significant input to the work on the specification for new licensing software.

The UK CITES web site is updated monthly with c.3-4,000 hits (sessions) per month.

Confirmed our agreement to act as future Scientific Authority to British Indian Ocean Territory (administered by FCO).

Corporate 1	8.1, 14.3	Influencing Europe/ Habitats Directive advice	<p>Develop the scope and effectiveness of UK influence on EC nature conservation policy, legislation and practice and spread information about the EU and nature conservation to the country agencies and others by cultivating links and developing dialogue with the European Environment Agency and its topic centres (especially the European Topic Centre for Nature Protection and Biodiversity (ETC/NPB)), CEC Directorates General and other EU Member States; specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• act as UK National Reference Centre for the ETC/NPB</li> <li>• promote UK views on Natura 2000 site monitoring and favourable conservation status assessment with the ETC/NPB, CEC DG Environment and other Member States' governments.</li> </ul>	Vin Fleming
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**On track? Yes**

**Details:** Office accommodation has now been found in Brussels, as agreed with the agencies in Q1, with attention diverted from other tasks as a result.

JNCC provided a response to the formation of a Commission Strategy for Sustainable Development for the EU at the consultation stage, and in direct advice to the DETR official attending the Environment Council, and to the Prime Minister attending the European Council. Our comments focussed on the impact of EU policies outside the EU15, and on attempting to green the CAP and CFP. Outcomes from the European Council were positive in these respects.

The JNCC has been accepted as a member of the European Environmental Advisory Councils. This will enable us to work closely with the UK agencies that are already members through this network to achieve our goals.

We are also dealing with ETCNC and attending an expert meeting on biodiversity reporting and indicators; developing a line on indicators with agencies to be presented in November to the EEAC meeting (this overlaps with programme 24 target 5) and we have recently been asked to contribute to a DG research project looking at remote sensing and N2K sites.

Corporate 2	9.1	Global influencing	Help to secure integrated international effort for the conservation of albatross and petrels by advising the DETR on a new agreement on the species' conservation, under the Bonn Convention.	Mark Tasker
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**On track? Yes**

**Details:** The Agreement was signed by Australia, Brazil, Chile, France, New Zealand, Peru and UK at a ceremony in Canberra on 19 June 2001.

**2. Site-based conservation advice**

Key/ Corporate target no.	Project & Target no(s).	Project name(s)	Details	Report by
Key 3	48 extra, 14.1, 39.2, 30 all	Natura 2000 (an amalgam)	<p>Under the EC Habitats and Birds Directives, assist the conservation of European habitats and species of conservation importance by continuing the process of selecting, documenting and submitting to the EC the list of Natura 2000 sites in the UK; specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify possible marine SACs between 12 and 200 nautical miles from UK shores and advise government</li> <li>• prepare draft selection guidelines and identify possible marine SPAs out to the 200 nautical mile limit</li> <li>• publish a review of the proposed UK list of terrestrial, freshwater and intertidal SPAs and supporting research.</li> <li>• coordinate amendments to the UK SAC list as part of the moderation process and publish an account of the revised UK SAC series</li> </ul>	Marcus Yeo

**On track? Yes**

**Details:** A small number of additional candidate SACs have been submitted to the CEC in advance of the planned Atlantic Regional meeting in December, and the UK's site list is now substantially complete. Outstanding sites include several proposed estuary and raised bog sites, for which discussions are still ongoing. Following consultation, a paper on the selection of SACs for degraded raised bog was presented to the Joint Committee in September, and further advice will be submitted to Government. JNCC Report 270 (which describes the UK SAC selection process) has been extensively revised, and has been issued for consultation within the country agencies and Government.

The Service Level Agreement with DEFRA and DTI to undertake the Offshore Natura 2000 project has been amended at DEFRA's request to extend it to the end of March 2002. DEFRA now wish that the main objective of the SLA is "to provide information to enable the identification of marine SACs and SPAs between 12 and 200 nm from UK shores"; **thus the first two bullet points of this target are amended.** Relevant habitat interpretations and selection criteria for all but wide-ranging marine species/birds have been agreed. Advice on the extent of relevant habitats has been received under a sub-contract to British Geological Survey; BGS are working to further refine this advice, particularly for areas of reef

Work on marine SPAs is now well underway. Last winter JNCC conducted aerial surveys of the most important sites for wintering concentrations of seabirds (divers and seaduck). These and other data will be analysed later in the year, once staff are in post.

SPA Review published on JNCC website in September 2001: SPA Scientific Group established with some JNCC assistance)

Corporate 3	1.1	Geological Conservation Review	Further the conservation of nationally and internationally important Earth science sites by providing a full justification for their selection as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), through publishing eight volumes of the Geological Conservation Review series (if the foot and mouth outbreak permits site access to enable text completion).	Neil Ellis
<p><b>On track? Yes –target has been revised to five volumes in the year</b></p> <p>Details:</p> <p>Details: Our revised target is to produce 5 volumes this year. So far, we have published 1 volume (<i>Mesozoic and Tertiary Palaeobotany</i>). <i>Upper Cretaceous</i> is expected to be delivered in November.</p> <p><i>Quaternary of Northern England</i> and <i>Permian Triassic Red Beds</i> will both be in proof before Christmas and the <i>Middle Jurassic</i> book is now with the professional subeditor.</p> <p>The <i>Coastal Geomorphology</i> volume will be subedited in November and <i>Lower Jurassic Stratigraphy</i> we aim to have subedited in December.</p> <p><i>Permian-Carboniferous Igneous Rocks</i> and <i>Fossil Mammals and Birds</i> should be completed before Christmas.</p> <p>Several other titles are planned to be completed over the coming months in readiness for the publications programme for next year.</p>				

### 3. Species-focused conservation advice

Key/ Corporate target no.	Project & Target no(s).	Project name(s)	Details	Report by
Key 4	40.1	Quinquennial Review of Wildlife and Countryside Act schedules	Ensure that the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 safeguards the UK plant and animal species whose effective conservation depends on statutory protection by working with the country agencies to review existing protected animals and plants on schedules 5 and 8 of the Act, to determine whether they should be retained there and whether further species should be included, and submit the review to Government by autumn 2001.	Ian McLean
<p><b>On track? No</b></p> <p><b>Details:</b> About 2 months behind due to external factors. Further slippage in second quarter, but progress now being made to catch up.</p>				
Key 5	46.1,2,3	Species status assessment	To allow accurate conclusions to be reached about the condition of the UK nature conservation resource and to inform environmental decision making, establish, publish and bring into operation a single agreed process to assess the conservation status of UK species, ensuring that the process is both efficient and transparent.	Ian McLean
<p><b>On track? Yes</b></p> <p><b>Details:</b> progress made with agreeing the processes, links maintained to the BoCC initiative (first two quarters).</p>				
Corporate 4	39.4	UK ornithological advice	<p>Further the conservation of Britain's important populations of wintering waterfowl and breeding birds; specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• through our contract with the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, substantially complete the rationalisation of waterfowl surveillance areas with designated site boundaries</li> <li>• in collaboration with the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), commence publication of an annual statement of trends in British breeding bird populations and their probable causes</li> </ul>	Ian McLean

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• with the BTO, set up a website giving a summary of current knowledge of the effects of land use and climate change on common breeding bird populations</li> <li>• update and publish definitive lists of population sizes for British birds, co-ordinating the work of the Avian Population Estimates Panel.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>On track? Yes</b></p> <p><b>Details:</b> The rationalisation of the waterfowl surveillance areas with designated site boundaries has progressed but not completed.</p> <p>The work on production of the first annual statement of trends in breeding bird populations and their probable causes is planned for the final quarter.</p> <p>The work on summary of current knowledge and the effects of land use and climate change on common breeding bird populations has been planned for the second half of the year.</p> <p>A first meeting of the Avian Populations Estimate Panel was held to agree the process and timescale for the second edition of this work. It aims to be completed by the end of the F/Y. Work is underway with WWT to review boundaries of current sites.</p>				

4. The Wider Environment

Key/ Corporate target no.	Project & Target no(s).	Project name(s)	Details	Report by
Key 6	29.all	Fisheries advice	Improve safeguards to marine habitats and species in UK waters that are threatened by unsustainable fisheries activities by influencing the 2002 review of the EC Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) by submitting a joint country conservation agency response to the CFP Green Paper and holding a workshop to influence wider views in Europe.	Mark Tasker
<p><b>On track? Yes</b></p> <p><b>Details:</b> The response to the Green paper, drafted co-operatively among all country agencies and ourselves, was sent to the Commission. A workshop was held in Brussels in May that brought together other advisors and researchers on nature conservation/environment and fisheries from across Europe. An agreed statement from this meeting was presented to the European Commission at a wide public meeting, held by the Commission, in July 2001. A workshop on environmental aspects of the Common Fisheries Policy, organised by IEEP, was co-sponsored and attended in September. Work has continued within ICES, OSPAR and the North Sea conference process to establish Ecosystem Quality Objectives. Two meetings on the interaction between marine predators (including fishermen) and fish stocks were attended one in Finland, the other in Denmark. The first ever meeting of ICES' Advisory Committee on Ecosystems was attended and advice drafted both on small cetacean bycatch and on Ecosystem Quality Objectives. Advice on both of these matters has now gone to the European Commission and OSPAR respectively.</p>				
Key 7	13.1	Strategic habitats advice	<p>Help to conserve UK biodiversity by publishing interpretative material on BAP habitats; specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>publish the interpretation manual for BAP broad habitats, including descriptions of coastal and marine BAP broad habitats, agreed working definitions of all BAP priority habitats and correspondences with other habitat classifications, for use by country agencies and other BAP partners</li> </ul>	Marcus Yeo
<p><b>On track? Yes</b></p> <p><b>Details:</b> Work on developing agreed definitions of all BAP priority habitats (including correspondences with other habitat classifications) is progressing well, and has been taken forward in close liaison with English Nature's SW NBN project. Wide consultation on the draft definitions will take place later in 2001. Work on broad habitat definitions is also on track, except for the marine habitat accounts, which have been delayed because of staff shortages in the Marine Information Team.</p>				

Corporate 5	28.all	Marine advice	<p>Further the conservation of marine habitats and species through statutory consultation processes and informally by advising government departments, the hydrocarbons industry and others on the impacts of existing and proposed non-fisheries industrial activities in UK waters, specifically in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• c. 35 Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs)</li> <li>• c. 300 EIA dispensations</li> <li>• c. 30 oil spill contingency plans</li> <li>• c. 40 solid waste disposal licences</li> <li>• c. 120 seismic survey applications</li> <li>• c. 30 other consultations</li> </ul>	Mark Tasker
<p><b>On track?</b> Yes</p> <p><b>Details:</b> In the first half of the year, statutory advice given in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 28 Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs)</li> <li>• 162 EIA dispensations and 64 amendments</li> <li>• 21 oil spill contingency plans</li> <li>• 39 pipeline or solid waste disposal licences</li> <li>• 125 seismic survey applications (note that this exceeds the Scottish Executive expectation (see comments on our 2001/02 corporate plan) for the entire year)</li> <li>• 10 other consultations, including 4 on decommissioning plans</li> </ul> <p>There appears to be more activity than expected in this FY. Much of this will have been caused by new regulations to implement the Habitats and the Birds Directives in offshore waters that came into effect early in 2001/02.</p> <p>In relation to shipping, further input was provided to the MEHRAs process through co-ordination of country agency input to help define boundaries. A consultation document is expected from government in the latter part of this year.</p>				
Corporate 6	17.2	Land Use Policy	<p>Inform land use policy development in the UK to ensure that the needs of nature conservation are given due consideration by drawing up an integrated list of rural targets and indicators, in partnership with the statutory conservation, environment and countryside agencies, and having regard to the longer-term implications of the foot and mouth disease outbreak and the public response to it.</p>	Marcus Yeo

<p><b>On track? No</b></p> <p><b>Details:</b> The first phase of the project was successfully completed with the submission of a detailed report by IEEP in August 2001. This report has aroused considerable interest in the country agencies and also DEFRA. Because of the complexity of the issues, the LUPG has decided that further consideration is required before the second phase of the work is initiated. This is unlikely to happen before the end of 2001. The project will therefore extend into 2002/03.</p>				
Corporate 7	52.3	Marine information	<p>Contribute to wider knowledge and understanding of the UK's marine nature conservation resource and help secure its long-term future; specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• publish the marine biotope classification for inshore waters of Britain and Ireland, by end 2001/02</li> <li>• complete publication of the 15-volume Marine Nature Conservation Review area summary series, with the production of three volumes relating to Scottish sealochs</li> </ul>	David Connor
<p><b>On track? No</b></p> <p><b>Details:</b></p> <p><b>Biotope classification</b></p> <p>Good progress made on refinement of littoral rock, infralittoral rock and sublittoral sediment sections of the classification; expect to move to external consultation phase on these in Q3. Reasonable progress on circalittoral rock section. Correlation of classification to Ramsar wetland types produced.</p> <p><b>MNCR Area Summaries</b></p> <p>Sector 13 (West Scotland sealochs) – About 90% of draft text and maps received from contractor; remainder expected Q3. Sector 14 (Outer Hebrides sealochs) – External review comments received. Corrections to text/maps to be done.</p> <p>Sector 15 (North-west Scotland sealochs) – External review comments received. Corrections to text/maps to be done.</p>				
Corporate 8	19.1, 19.2	Air pollution	<p>Aid management and protection of UK statutory sites for nature conservation by producing a revised edition of the Air Pollution Handbook as an interactive database for the statutory country conservation agencies, detailing the effects of air pollution on the natural environment, describing monitoring protocols and including case studies relating to the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directive and the Natura 2000 Review of Consents.</p>	Marcus Yeo

**On track? Yes**

**Details:** An inter-agency project group (comprising JNCC, EN, CCW, SNH, SEPA, EA, EAW and DEFRA) was formed in Q1 to co-ordinate the development of the database. The structure of the database was reviewed in relation to the IPPC and Habitats Directives and will include a spatial component that will enable country agency staff to assess critical load and critical level exceedance for their site that will help the decision making process when IPPC applications are sent to them on consultation. This project has now been let to CEH Edinburgh. However, for the database to have full NBN functionality, it was necessary to redesign the existing MS ACCESS database to run on a web-based platform. This has significantly increased the cost of the project and all parties have agreed to the changes to the work programme/modules to be delivered this financial year. A working database will be ready at the end of this financial year for roll out to statutory conservation agencies local/area teams. Discussions for the next financial year have been held with partners to secure further funding to develop the database further

Corporate 9	13.2	EC Water Framework Directive	<p>Contribute to safeguarding the aquatic environment in the UK and its associated habitats and biodiversity by providing advice on technical issues relating to the EC Water Framework Directive, contributing to the work of inter-agency groups covering freshwaters and estuarine/coastal waters; specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organise a workshop on tools available in the UK for defining reference conditions, developing typologies and defining levels of ecological status for freshwaters</li> <li>• contribute to the work of the UK Technical Advisory Group as required.</li> </ul>	Marcus Yeo
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**On track? Yes**

**Details:** The workshop on tools available in the UK for defining reference conditions, developing typologies and defining levels of ecological status for freshwaters was successfully held in April 2001, and involved all of the UK conservation and environment agencies. The Freshwater LCN continues to provide the chair and secretariat for the inter-agency Freshwater Technical Group, and has contributed to the UK Technical Advisory Group. JNCC has also contributed significantly to the work of the Estuarine/Coastal Technical Group, in particular leading a EU-wide project on the characterisation of water body types. A new p/t Water Framework Directive officer will take up post in October.

## 5. Survey and monitoring

Key/ Corporate target no.	Project & Target no(s).	Project name(s)	Details	Report by
Key 8	6.1	Common standards for monitoring	Assist site management and protection for the benefit of nature conservation by producing UK-wide guidance for country conservation agencies on setting and assessing conservation objectives for habitat, species and Earth science interest features on statutory sites (SSSIs, ASSIs, SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites). (Assessment will be limited by the extent to which on-site testing can be arranged, in view of the Foot and Mouth outbreak.)	Marcus Yeo
<p><b>On track? Yes</b></p> <p><b>Details:</b> A revised timetable for the production of the UK guidance has been agreed and has been circulated to all inter-agency groups. This outlines all the steps needed before the final UK guidance is delivered to JNCC in March 2002. Important steps include QA of the draft guidance by JNCC, limited field testing, and consultation with stakeholders. During Q2, significant progress has been made in agreeing how local distinctiveness should be incorporated into the generic UK monitoring guidance. The 14 inter-agency groups who are preparing the guidance continue to make progress at different rates. There have been particular problems with some of the species groups, and additional staff resources are being found within the agencies to address these issues. Overall, the groups are still on track to have completed all the guidance by spring 2002. During Q3, JNCC will undertake quality assurance of the draft guidance and pass the conclusions back to the inter-agency groups for consideration. Consultation with external organisations will also be initiated.</p> <p>An inter-agency monitoring workshop was held on 23 May. This successfully agreed guidelines for monitoring species interest features. However, there was no agreement on the extent to which targets should be modified to reflect site-specific characteristics.</p> <p>At the moment, this work is still on track to be completed by the end of the f/y. However, there are still important issues to be resolved, and some of the inter-agency groups will have to increase their efforts if agreed deadlines are to be reached. Successful co-ordination of the project will require considerable input from JNCC staff.</p>				
Key 9	45.1, 45.2	Mammal monitoring	<p>Further the conservation of British terrestrial mammals by enabling changes in their distribution and population status to be detected, highlighting the need for action; specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maintain a national surveillance network for British bats, in partnership with the Bat Conservation Trust</li> <li>• set up pilot scheme(s) for a national surveillance network for other British mammals, in partnership with the People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES) and others. (Fieldwork may be suspended or reduced by the Foot and Mouth outbreak.)</li> </ul>	Ian McLean

<p><b>On track? Yes</b></p> <p><b>Details:</b> Some fieldwork changes due to foot and mouth disease. Further progress made with establishing pilot schemes.</p>				
Key 10	50.1, 50.2, 50.3, 50.4	Seabird 2000	<p>Provide information to underpin the conservation of seabirds and their breeding colonies in the UK and in Ireland; specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• complete (as far as possible, given the Foot and Mouth outbreak) the Seabird 2000 census of all breeding seabirds in Britain and Ireland</li> <li>• complete inputting of data to the database and commence analysis</li> </ul>	Jim Reid
<p><b>On track? No</b></p> <p><b>Details:</b></p> <p>Foot and mouth outbreak caused the postponement of some census work, though most was completed successfully. The outstanding work will be completed in May and June 2002. External funding has already been secured for this.</p> <p>Data input is progressing well, after initial teething problems with Recorder. In order to ensure that all existing data is entered by end January 2002, we propose to increase staff resources.</p>				
Corporate 10	15, 24	Habitat information/ Sampling framework	<p>Assist biodiversity conservation in the UK, especially under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, by formulating common standards and developing and testing practical surveillance and monitoring methodologies (as far as practicable, given the limitations on fieldwork consequent on the foot and mouth disease outbreak); specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop methodologies for monitoring BAP priority habitats across the UK, using lowland grasslands as a pilot study</li> <li>• work with the country agencies and other relevant organisations to develop common standards for habitat inventories, focusing on BAP priority habitats</li> <li>• formulate future monitoring and surveillance strategies for BAP plants</li> </ul>	Paul Rose

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• explore ways to fill one of the many gaps in the current provision of species surveillance by making best use of existing information and guiding future biological recording practice, the chosen methodology to serve as a 'best practice' example for filling other surveillance gaps for which this approach is appropriate</li> </ul>	
<p><b>On track?</b> No</p> <p><b>Details:</b></p> <p>JNCC have been working with the other agencies to develop an agreed approach to the development of habitat inventories and the monitoring/surveillance of BAP priority habitats. A discussion paper on these issues will be presented to the Biodiversity Information Group in October. Close links have been developed with the NBN SW pilot, which will be very useful in establishing 'best practice' for habitat inventories. The pilot study on monitoring lowland grasslands is not underway. Delays in finally agreeing the common standards monitoring guidance for lowland grasslands prohibits JNCC from developing and undertaking the surveillance work. The outbreak of foot &amp; mouth has also made the fieldwork impossible.</p> <p>Regarding habitat inventories, we are in discussion with various people (e.g. NBN SW pilot, EN, habitat LCNs etc) about what is required in the way of common standards. Our main role so far has been in ensuring that everyone is using the same definitions of BAP priority habitats. We will also be looking at the extent to which CS2000 can be used to supply basic information on priority habitats.</p> <p>The pilot project on threatened plant information has ended its first phase of work and is developing a future work programme aimed specifically at using the information from phase as a basis for future surveillance and monitoring activities.</p> <p>Further development of moth surveillance building on the work of IAC Rothampstead and in partnership with species advice, will start in the second half the year to fill the gap in monitoring. This work will be linked to project 44 target on Lepidoptera surveillance</p>				

## 6. Knowledge management

Key/ Corporate target no.	Project & Target no(s).	Project name(s)	Details	Report by
Key 11	55.1, 20.2	Websites/ BAP	<p>Publicise and disseminate nature conservation advice and information to environmental policy makers and practitioners efficiently and effectively for the benefit of nature conservation by developing the websites that JNCC hosts on its own behalf or for others as effective and attractive communication tools; specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• manage the UK CITES website</li> <li>• develop the UK Biodiversity Group website</li> <li>• host the UK CBD Clearing House Mechanism website</li> <li>• upgrade the JNCC website as a communications tool</li> </ul>	Malcolm Vincent
<p><b>On track? Yes</b></p> <p><b>Details:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good progress has been made during the first 6 months. An outline strategy for the technological underpinning of the websites and process for identifying and adding content has been developed. In particular, work to develop the database to support the JNCC website (and other websites) has completed its first phase.</li> <li>• JNCC website is back on target. It is being progressively improved now that staff are in place and a process established for more rapid content delivery.</li> <li>• UK BAP website has been updated on an ongoing basis.</li> <li>• UK CITES website has been kept up-to-date and is operating well. The visit rate is about 3-4,000 per month, mainly from official bodies, with USA, UK, Germany and Netherlands predominating.</li> <li>• UK CHM website has completed the first phase of its upgrade, with improved layout and links to other websites. Two writing contracts have been let to improve content.</li> </ul>				

Key 12	53.2, 53.3	National Biodiversity Network (NBN)	<p>As partners in the National Biodiversity Network Trust, which enables the collection, collation and dissemination of biodiversity information to members to common standards through an internet gateway, contribute to the development of the NBN overall so that it meets the biodiversity information needs of the country agencies, government and NBN data contributors and users (priorities for data access may be reviewed as the year progresses in the light of the effects of the Foot and Mouth outbreak on long-term surveillance and monitoring contracts):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide access to JNCC’s Cetaceans, Seabird 2000 and Seabirds at Sea datasets</li> <li>• provide access to selected datasets co-owned by the JNCC, including WeBS</li> <li>• provide access to selected habitat datasets, including the JNCC’s standing waters database and rivers database</li> <li>• develop software to enable searches of NBN datasets to be undertaken on a geographical area basis</li> <li>• supervise access to key DETR biodiversity datasets in collaboration with the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology</li> <li>• continue to advise on and promote the NBN with key partners.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	Lawrence Way
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**On track? Partially**

**Details:**

On track:

- Supervision of DEFRA work in collaboration with CEH, interim reports produced, a detailed project plan to September delivered, and advice given on use of common lands data and relationship of NBN to DEFRA's CIS system. Complete revision of the gateway, including DEFRA data sets, in advanced prototype stage, and on track for DEFRA delivery deadline in November.
- Advise to key partners – CCW, EHS, SNH and EN all developing NBN projects this year, scoping work delivered to CCW, and EHS, possibility of CCW receipts this year. Advice delivered to Forestry Commission, Environment Agency, Scottish Executive and CMD/RDS in DEFRA. Technical advice, planning assistance and loading of SNH peatland data sets provided for SNH to back up Scotland launch of NBN and NBN gateway. CCW have contracted JNCC to manage population of the gateway with sample welsh BAP data sets.
- Seabird 2000 and Cetaceans access scoped and access will not be delivered to Cetaceans data and a major subset of Seabird Survey 2000 data.
- Software development for geographic searching – some progress has been made. We have worked with the DEFRA MAGIC project (multi agency countryside GIS) and established how the MAGIC WWW service can provide some of the detailed mapping needed for using NBN data, and how MAGIC can also provide some of the geographical searching. Joint work to prototype this is now due in November.

Not on track

- Selection of habitat data sets to access is dependant on the outcome of a review of LCN habitat data sets which started late second quarter and is due to complete by start of forth quarter. We cannot yet predict if the stated priorities are achievable with resources allocated. Alternative work may yield data sets eg: coastal, work advising Forestry Commission. Already support to SNH has lead to peatland inventory being added to the gateway.
- Provide access to selected data sets co-owned by JNCC – threatened plants and BRC data sets have work planning in place and already Hoverfly data has been added to the gateway. Wetland Birds: the achievable target this year is sorting out the management of the WEBS data into a single effective database. WWT and JNCC do not have the resources to deliver internet access this year and so the target needs to be revised. However even the target of achieving a single database for WEBS looks vulnerable due to skills, sub contractual and other issues and we plan to put in significant effort in the third quarter to ensure the project meets its target.

Part of the problem is that the access targets were set last September and were aspirational. A review of Data Services priorities was completed in June reviewing all pieces of access related work with all teams of JNCC. The implications are that access to WEBS, Seabirds at Sea, rivers and standing waters data sets cannot be delivered this year. However access to threatened plants, and a habitat data set will be delivered..

Additional

- We have developed a briefing document on how access will be controlled through the NBN gateway. This was a major conceptual block to expanding access as data owners were reluctant to use the gateway without knowing how they could manage access to their data sets through it. The gateway has been developed to implement many of the concepts developed in the briefing, in time for population of the gateway post its November update.

Key/ Corporate target no.	Project & Target no(s).	Project name(s)	Details	Report by
Corporate 11	21.1	Biodiversity reporting	<p>Help to ensure effective implementation in the UK of international nature conservation Conventions, Directives and Agreements by contributing to statutory nature conservation reporting obligations; especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• edit the EC Habitats Directive Report (by September 2001)</li> <li>• contribute to the CBD implementation report (by May 2001)</li> <li>• edit the Ramsar Convention Triennial Implementation Report (by February 2002)</li> </ul>	Paul Rose
<p><b>On track? Completed</b></p> <p><b>Details:</b></p> <p>EC Habitats Directive Report is completed</p> <p>CBD report is completed.</p> <p>Consultation draft of Ramsar report completed.</p>				
Corporate 12	48.1	SAS 6	<p>Inform policy and decision-making about the offshore marine environment and thereby secure the conservation of marine mammals using UK waters by publishing an atlas of cetacean distribution for the seas around north-west Europe.</p>	Jim Reid
<p><b>On track? Yes</b></p> <p><b>Details:</b></p> <p>On track still for publication this FY. All maps are complete. A small (mostly) amount of text still needs to be written. However, one chapter has been outstanding for several months now and needs to be submitted without delay by the Marine Advisor; I have taken steps to involve another author to get this chapter written and will effect this unless I receive the chapter by an agreed deadline.</p>				

**7. Providing quality services**

Key/ Corporate target no.	Project & Target no(s).	Project name(s)	Details	Report by
Key 13	34.4	Quinquennial Review of the JNCC (FMPR)	Strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of UK and international nature conservation by providing full, accurate and timely information to the DETR Review Officer to facilitate the Quinquennial Review of the JNCC's role, finances and management.	Lissie Wright

**On track? Yes**

**Details:** JNCC submission to consultation made. Steering group has agreed ToR and timetable for Stage II and the Support Unit is assisting the Review Officer in taking these forward. This has included obtaining legal advice and developing proposals in relation to funding and staffing arrangements and supporting the development of a report relating to improved interpretation of special functions which has been submitted to the Steering Group. Work on improving the CP process is in progress and a meeting has been arranged between Chairman and the Review Officer to discuss the constitution of Committee.

Corporate 13	33.1, 33.5	Personnel	To enable the JNCC to meet its business needs and the employment-related needs of its staff, ensure sound management of JNCC's human resources; specifically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop and implement approaches to reduce the level of staff turnover and its adverse effects on business delivery</li> <li>• initiate action to address issues arising from the 2<sup>nd</sup> staff satisfaction survey</li> </ul>	Lissie Wright
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**On track? Yes**

**Details:** No progress on proposals put to Joint Personnel Group in May for retention measures for a group of staff which had 30% turnover last year and emphasis has now shifted to work on FMPR staffing arrangements. However other measures continue to be pursued and implemented and turnover appears to be slowing down (5% of permanent and FTA staff to date) indicating the target of 15% will be achieved by the end of the year.

The staff satisfaction working group has been successful in addressing several of the issues raised during the 2000 staff satisfaction survey, e.g. in developing ideas on training requirements and organisational flexibility. This has been achieved by feeding ideas to JNCC's personnel section. Issues relating to pay & conditions are now being addressed as part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the FMPR.

Corporate 14	32.3	Corporate services	<p>Implement greener working practices in both of the JNCC's offices, in accordance with the guidelines given by DETR; specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• benchmark the organisation in terms of environmental management</li> <li>• devise an environmental management policy</li> </ul>	Lissie Wright
<p><b>On track? Yes</b></p> <p><b>Details:</b> An environmental audit currently is underway. This will lead to further development of an environmental management policy.</p>				
Corporate 15	56.1	JNCC Management	<p>Achieve an effective focus for JNCC's work on nature conservation over the next 10 years by completing the strategic review, and finalise and publish the JNCC's strategy for 2001-2012 by December 2001</p>	Lissie Wright
<p><b>On track? Partial.</b></p> <p><b>Details:</b> Consultation has taken place with key stakeholders as agreed at the July Steering Group meeting. This will be developed further through the FMPR process – it seems unlikely that the December deadline for publishing the strategy will be met. The draft CP identifies elements of work that underpin the strategy and this will now be enhanced and developed further.</p>				