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## **JOINT NATURE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE**

### **SPENDING REVIEW 2004: PRELIMINARY SUBMISSION FROM THE JNCC**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This paper provides a provisional indication of the JNCC's spending plans for 2005-08 (the period covered by Spending Review 2004). Following further discussion with the Joint Committee, the JNCC's member bodies, UK Government departments and devolved administrations, a more considered and comprehensive assessment of the JNCC's funding requirements for the next Spending Review period will be formally submitted to Government.
- 1.2 Currently, the JNCC does not have agreed funding allocations for 2004/05 and 2005/06. For the purposes of this paper, it has been assumed that the JNCC's baseline funding for these two years will be capped at 2003/04 levels in real terms (i.e. grant in aid of £5.664 million in 2004/05 and £5.806 million in 2005/06).

#### **2. Factors influencing the JNCC's priorities and funding requirements for 2005-08**

- 2.1 During 2003, the JNCC has been developing its organisational strategy, building on the Statement of Strategic Direction agreed by the Joint Committee in December 2002. The Committee has formulated an outline strategic programme, comprising objectives and associated targets/activities, which will be discussed at the Committee meeting in September 2003.
- 2.2 The draft strategic programme contains seven objectives, which are intended to provide a framework for the JNCC's work over the next 10 years. These objectives are:
  - i. Develop and renew a shared vision for our wildlife and natural features, and in partnership with others, champion it to Government bodies and other organisations and encourage them to implement approaches that reflect the value and needs of our wildlife and natural features.
  - ii. Provide strategic co-ordination, evaluation and, where necessary, leadership of UK-wide strategies, policies, practices and standards that affect nature conservation, to enhance the protection and enrichment of the UK's natural heritage.
  - iii. Contribute expertise to the development and implementation of legislation and agreements that affect the European and wider international environment to ensure that they deliver nature conservation gains both within the UK and elsewhere.

- iv. Ensure that Government and other organisations are provided with the scientifically robust and policy-relevant information about biological and geological diversity that they need to make decisions that will protect and enhance the environment in the UK and internationally.
  - v. Advise on and, where necessary, lead the development and implementation of initiatives to protect and enhance the biological and geological diversity of the UK's marine environment outside territorial waters (beyond 12 nautical miles from the shore).
  - vi. Promote measures that effectively protect and enhance biological and geological diversity in the UK's Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, and share good conservation practice worldwide.
  - vii. Advise on the effect that UK activities and policies have on biological and geological diversity internationally, contribute to the development of appropriate responses, and promote the sustainable use of environmental resources worldwide.
- 2.3 The JNCC's current activities form the core of the proposed strategic programme, but the programme also reflects a significant shift in direction in some areas, as well as elements of a new role. The main changes from the JNCC's current role are:
- i. greater involvement in international activities, including a phased move/expansion into new areas of work (e.g. Overseas Territories, the UK's 'global footprint');
  - ii. a stronger leadership role, especially in maintaining a strategic overview of issues affecting the environment, and developing and promoting a shared vision for UK nature conservation;
  - iii. refocusing the JNCC's UK activities to maximise the value that the JNCC adds to the country agencies' work; this involves shifting effort into setting standards, co-ordinating activities and providing advice at a more strategic level than at present, and undertaking a stronger quality assurance role;
  - iv. placing the JNCC's advice more firmly within the context of sustainable development by forging stronger links between environmental information and relevant social and economic factors.
- 2.4 It is anticipated that UK Government will require the JNCC to take on various new burdens over the next few years, in particular to enable the UK to meet commitments arising from international agreements (e.g. EU directives and the World Summit on Sustainable Development) and to co-ordinate certain GB/UK-wide initiatives.

- 2.5 As a result of the JNCC's Financial, Management and Policy Review (FMPR), it is anticipated that major organisational changes will have been implemented by April 2005, enabling the JNCC to employ its own staff, let contracts in its own name, etc. These arrangements will have significant implications for how the JNCC operates over the Spending Review period, as human resources and financial functions are fully transferred from the country agencies to the JNCC.
- 2.6 In addition to the usual inflationary increases, the recent introduction of guaranteed pay progression for country agency staff will have significant implications for the JNCC's salary bill over the Spending Review period. This is particularly important, as staff costs comprise roughly 50% of the JNCC's total annual expenditure.
- 2.7 The JNCC has demonstrated its commitment to making efficiency gains and reducing running costs wherever possible. We will continue to strive for appropriate savings in the future. However, we will not be able to absorb increases arising from inflation and pay progression without significant impacts on core programmes. In addition, initial investment will be required in some areas to reap longer term efficiency benefits.

### **3. Resource implications**

- 3.1 Most of the JNCC's funding supports core advisory work (for Government and country agencies) and long-term surveillance programmes. Short-term, time-limited projects comprise only a small proportion of the JNCC's total expenditure. These factors constrain the JNCC's flexibility and its ability to take on new work without associated funding.
- 3.2 Nevertheless, some work programmes will come to an end over the next two to three years, freeing up money for other projects. We also anticipate making internal resource shifts in line with the JNCC's strategy. Examples of work requiring reduced funding include the following.
- i. Work associated with implementing the FMPR recommendations (e.g. establishing a company limited by guarantee, setting up new governance arrangements, and putting in place new systems and procedures) will be complete by April 2005. However, there will be ongoing funding implications, e.g. for staffing levels.
  - ii. Publication of the Geological Conservation Review (GCR) series is planned for completion in 2004/05.
  - iii. Following major investment in recent years, development of Recorder (and its marine module) is likely to require reduced funding from 2005 onwards.
- 3.3 Set against this, there will be various new/developing work programmes arising from implementation of the JNCC's strategy and new burdens from Government. The costs of some of these can be met from internal resource

shifts, but others can only be undertaken if additional funding is made available.

- 3.4 Requirements for additional resources are summarised in Annex A. This excludes some areas of work where the scope of the JNCC's future role has yet to be decided (e.g. co-ordination of non-native species policy). There may also be other as yet unidentified new work, e.g. arising from the Haskins review.
- 3.5 It is assumed that Defra and the devolved administrations will continue to provide the majority of the JNCC's funding through ring-fenced contributions in the country agencies' grant in aid settlements. There may be potential for Government to provide direct funding for certain additional services that are undertaken specifically for UK Government. This will be discussed with Defra and other relevant UK departments.

#### **4. Revision of Defra's PSA**

- 4.1 The targets contained within Defra's PSA for 2003-06 primarily relate to England or the UK. The UK's international environmental commitments (e.g. arising from the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), the Convention on Biological Diversity, and other multilateral environmental agreements) are notably absent. Nature conservation in the UK's marine environment is also poorly covered.
- 4.2 We believe that Spending Review 2004 provides an opportunity to produce a more balanced set of objectives and targets for Defra. Government has already given an undertaking to build WSSD obligations into departmental delivery planning systems, and we recommend that the following three key biodiversity commitments arising from WSSD should be incorporated within a revised PSA for Defra:
- i. achieve a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biological diversity by 2010;
  - ii. establish representative networks of marine protected areas by 2012;
  - iii. maintain or restore fish stocks to levels that can produce the maximum sustainable yield with the aim of achieving these goals for depleted stocks on an urgent basis and where possible not later than 2015.
- 4.3 The addition of these targets would greatly strengthen Defra's PSA. As well as formally acknowledging the importance of delivering WSSD commitments, it would also cover other important Defra priorities, including the Convention on Biological Diversity, the OSPAR Convention, EU Habitats and Species Directives, and reform of the Common Fisheries Policy.
- 4.4 Further consideration will be needed to decide exactly how these WSSD targets could best be incorporated into a revised PSA. In particular, it may be desirable to tailor the targets to reflect the specific contribution that the UK will make to achieving the global objectives.

- 4.5 Delivery of WSSD commitments is not solely the responsibility of Defra, and we recommend that other Government departments (e.g. DfID, FCO) also ensure that relevant WSSD targets are embedded within revised PSAs.

**Annex A. Summary of additional funding requirements for 2005-08**

Key outputs/activities	Main drivers	Estimated costs above baseline (£k)		
		05/06	06/07	07/08
<i>Ecosystem management and sustainable development</i>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote effective application of ecosystem management approaches in the UK, in line with international best practice</li> <li>Improve the provision of advice to Government on UK policies, strategies and initiatives that affect the environment, placing advice on nature conservation issues within a socio-economic context</li> <li>Support Defra in their cross-departmental sustainable development role</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convention on Biological Diversity and other MEAs</li> <li>UK Sustainable Development Strategy (and Defra PSA target on promoting sustainable development across Government)</li> </ul>	40	60	60
<i>Non-native species</i>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a consistent GB-wide approach to non-native species policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follow-up to Government's Review of Non-native Species Policy</li> <li>Convention on Biological Diversity (initiatives on alien invasive species)</li> </ul>	Scope and cost of work unclear		
<i>Multilateral environmental agreements and European environmental instruments</i>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide increased support for effective and efficient implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity</li> <li>Work with Government to improve integration between multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and to harmonise international reporting obligations</li> <li>Provide more focused intelligence on emerging European environmental issues, and identify priorities for UK influence in Europe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convention on Biological Diversity (and other MEAs)</li> <li>WSSD targets on biodiversity</li> <li>EU legislation and policies affecting the environment</li> </ul>	50	50	80
<i>Monitoring and surveillance</i>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a scientifically robust programme for the surveillance of terrestrial, freshwater and coastal Annex I and BAP priority habitats (linked to Countryside Survey)</li> <li>Pilot national surveillance programmes for additional species groups and enhance existing programmes (where there is a clearly demonstrated need)</li> <li>Implement a UK-wide quality assurance programme for designated site monitoring</li> <li>Develop and begin to implement a robust and cost-effective collaborative surveillance programme for marine habitats (integrated across inshore and offshore environments), and undertake a holistic mapping programme for the OSPAR area</li> <li>Support the implementation of a monitoring programme for marine protected areas beyond territorial waters (scope of JNCC role currently unclear)</li> <li>Provide a wider biogeographical context for assessing the status of UK biodiversity by sharing data and information with European organisations and specialist networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EU directive, MEA and UK BAP reporting obligations (UK-wide common standards are essential to meet these obligations)</li> <li>Defra PSA target on SSSI condition in England (and similar devolved administration targets in other parts of the UK)</li> <li>OSPAR Convention</li> </ul>	400	600	700

Key outputs/activities	Main drivers	Estimated costs above baseline (£k)		
		05/06	06/07	07/08
<b><i>Management of biodiversity and earth heritage information</i></b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Champion open electronic access to a wide range of biodiversity, pressure and policy data, and undertake targeted development of electronic systems for managing biodiversity and earth science data (e.g. NBN) to meet user needs</li> <li>• Interpret biodiversity and environmental pressure information at biogeographic, country and regional scales, draw policy-relevant conclusions, and disseminate these conclusions actively</li> <li>• Provide technical support for the creation of UK and international biodiversity and sustainable development indicators</li> <li>• Implement an efficient system for electronic record and data management within JNCC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU directive, UK BAP and MEA reporting requirements</li> <li>• Formulation of UK environmental policies</li> <li>• Government targets on electronic access to information</li> <li>• Internal efficiency gains</li> </ul>	150	100	100
<b><i>Nature conservation beyond territorial waters</i></b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commission broadscale surveys and undertake data analyses to support identification of a comprehensive network of Natura 2000 sites beyond 12 nautical miles, and prepare site management plans (scope of JNCC's role depends on the content of new offshore regulations)</li> <li>• Identify a network of OSPAR marine protected areas within UK waters</li> <li>• Promote effective strategies and approaches for sustainable use of the marine environment in the NE Atlantic and adjacent waters (approaches will be based on placing nature conservation within a sustainable development framework, as trialled in the Regional Seas pilot)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU Habitats and Birds Directives</li> <li>• Convention on Biological Diversity and OSPAR Convention</li> <li>• WSSD commitments on marine protected areas and restoring/maintaining fish stocks</li> <li>• Follow-up to Government's Review of Marine Nature Conservation and Regional Seas pilot</li> <li>• EU 6<sup>th</sup> Environmental Action Programme marine thematic strategy</li> </ul>	150	150	100
<b><i>Nature conservation in the UK's Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies</i></b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide advice to the administrations of Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies on nature conservation issues and promote adoption of good environmental practice</li> <li>• Undertake strategic overviews of nature conservation issues across Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies and advise on their significance, priorities, etc</li> <li>• Contribute to capacity-building in the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FCO PSA target on improving the environment of the Overseas Territories</li> <li>• Commitments under the Environment Charters for the Overseas Territories</li> <li>• WSSD biodiversity commitments</li> </ul>	30	70	110
<b><i>Sustainable use of environmental resources worldwide</i></b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise on the effects that UK activities and policies have on biological and geological diversity internationally</li> <li>• Develop advice to Government on how to regulate, mitigate or modify UK activities to ensure environmental sustainability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WSSD biodiversity commitments</li> <li>• Convention on Biological Diversity commitment to assist the biodiversity-related programmes of developing countries</li> </ul>	40	90	120
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>860</b>	<b>1120</b>	<b>1270</b>