





The Joint Nature Conservation Committee was established under statute in 1990* and commenced its work in April 1991.

The Joint Nature Conservation Committee is a forum through which the three country nature conservation agencies – the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW), English Nature and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) – deliver their statutory responsibilities for Great Britain as a whole and internationally. These responsibilities, known as the special functions, contribute to sustaining natural systems. The special functions are principally to:

- advise ministers on the development of policies for, or affecting, nature conservation in Great Britain and internationally;
- provide advice and knowledge to anyone on nature conservation issues affecting Great Britain and internationally;
- establish common standards throughout Great Britain for the monitoring of nature conservation and for research into nature conservation and the analysis of results;
- commission or support research which the Committee deems relevant to the special functions.

The work falls into two broad categories: core work, which covers all of the main advisory functions, and a series of supporting projects.

The work can be done through the Committee's own Support Unit, composed of staff assigned from the three country agencies, by one country agency leading on behalf of the others, or through a network of agency staff. Work is also commissioned from outside organisations.

Increasingly, JNCC is implementing its national advisory functions on a United Kingdom basis, and is working closely with the Environment and Heritage Service, Northern Ireland.

For a full overview of UK conservation in 2002/03, this report should be read in conjunction with those of the Countryside Council for Wales, English Nature, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Environment and Heritage Service, Northern Ireland.

*The Environmental Protection Act 1990



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01 Cover image:

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The JNCC has long been involved in efforts to afford greater protection to the basking shark and recently achieved as much under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. There is great demand for the fins of the species in the Far East and, as such, it has suffered from overfishing. The full picture can be seen on page 18.

02 Introductory image:

© Robert Thompson

The four-spotted chaser dragonfly *Libellula quadrimaculata* is one of a number of invertebrates that depend on fen sites such as the Turmennan Lough in Northern Ireland. This and another site were given Ramsar status during a Ramsar Convention conference attended by the JNCC in November 2002.

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Dear First Minister

As required by paragraph 10 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, I have the honour to present herewith the report of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee covering the period from 1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003.

Yours sincerely

Katharine Bryan

7th July 2003

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Chairman's Introduction



This is my first introduction to the Annual Report as Chairman and I couldn't have joined at a more exciting – or busy – time for the JNCC.

After two years of hard work, deliberation and consideration, the Committee is finally emerging from the Government's Financial Management and Policy Review (FMPR). This has gone to the very core of our role and the way in which we provide services to Government and our partners, and has enabled us to agree a new organisational structure. In large part that means greater financial independence, allowing us to plan for the longer-term and with a greater degree of confidence.

It also means that, through the creation of a Company Limited by Guarantee, we will be able to recruit our own staff using consistent terms and conditions, let contracts and remove much of the bureaucracy that exists between ourselves and the country agencies. The transition has already begun and is due to be completed by April 2005.

It has also been a year that has tested our international responsibilities to the full. We have contributed to four global conventions, acted as scientific adviser to the UK delegations to Conferences of four of these and co-ordinated all subsequent reporting. In this respect the burden on JNCC has been immense, but the opportunity to influence outcomes at these key decision making

events has enabled us to make great progress towards common goals.

Our advisers, for example, were directly involved in securing protection for the basking shark under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), a species otherwise facing possible extinction due to over-fishing. Many other shark species are similarly threatened and an achievement such as this could set a precedent for future protection. We also successfully made the case at conference that the Global Plant Strategy be accepted by Contracting Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity. We have since joined the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew and Plantlife in seeking to implement this within the UK.

“Most important of all, however, is the commitment and dedication of JNCC's staff without whom none of this would have been possible.”

Growing pressure on the environment means that Government has to work more closely with our European colleagues on issues of mutual concern and such integration is now starting to bear fruit. In accordance with the EC Habitats Directive, we have identified a final list of proposed Special Areas of Conservation (pSACs) and submitted it to the European Commission for consideration along with those of other Member States. Having established a joint agency office in Brussels last year, we have also been well placed to contribute to the development of new legislation, most notably reform of the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). By helping to secure important concessions relating to the protection of cetaceans and underwater habitats, we are feeding directly into a much bigger picture – that of sustainable management of our seas.

Collaboration is a theme running through much of our work and achievements during the year. As a lead agency for mapping, we have been working with a range of partners to chart the species and habitats of the Irish Sea. When combined with data relating to commercial and other human activity within this 'regional sea', we can begin to build up a complete picture of the demands placed upon it and develop a holistic approach of sustainable management. There is enormous potential for similar work elsewhere.

We have also continued the process of selecting a suite of marine sites of European conservation importance within British waters and helped establish an inter-agency team to complete this work. Linked to this is our proposal for the UK's first offshore SAC in the shape of Darwin Mounds, a cold water coral reef, and our endorsement to Government that

Carmarthen Bay qualifies as Britain's first proposed marine Special Protection Area (SPA) as a non-breeding habitat for seabirds.

Such work clearly needs to be underpinned by hard scientific research and here again we have achieved much, developing radical new ways of surveying seabird distributions and establishing a framework for the selection, management and protection of marine protected areas within the northeast Atlantic.

Such a level of work will require careful consultation and commitment to working together with our partners. As you have seen, a firm foundation for such relationships has now been laid. I am indebted to my predecessor, Sir Angus Stirling, for having set in place such a solid base from which to build.



Most important of all, however, is the commitment and dedication of JNCC's staff without whom none of this would have been possible. During my first year they have impressed me with their expertise, professionalism and dedication to JNCC's goals. They have also made me feel immensely welcome and I am proud to be working among them.

It is this that gives me most confidence in the future of the JNCC and the developing role we play in nature conservation both in the UK and abroad.

Katharine Bryan

Rhagarweiniad y Cadeirydd

Dyma fy rhagarweiniad cyntaf i'r Adroddiad Blynyddol fel Cadeirydd a fyddwn i ddim wedi gallu ymuno ar adeg mwy cyffrous – na phrysur i'r JNCC.

Ar ôl dwy flynedd o waith caled, ystyried a thrafod, mae'r Pwyllgor o'r diwedd yn gallu symud ymlaen ar ôl Arolwg Rheolaeth a Pholisi Ariannol y Llywodraeth. Mae hwn wedi mynd at graidd ein rôl a'r modd y darparwn wasanaethau i'r Llywodraeth a'n partneriaid, ac wedi'n galluogi i gytuno ar strwythur trefniadaethol newydd. I raddau helaeth mae hynny'n golygu mwy o annibyniaeth ariannol, gan ganiatáu i ni gynllunio ar gyfer y tymor hwy, a chyda mwy o hyder.

Mae hefyd yn golygu, fel Cwmni a Gyfyngir gan Warrant, y byddwn yn gallu recriwtio ein staff ein hunain gan ddefnyddio amodau a thelerau cyson, gosod contractau a symud llawer o'r fiwrocratiaeth sy'n bodoli rhyngom ni ein hunain ac asiantaethau'r gwledydd. Mae'r pontio hwn eisoes wedi dechrau ac mae i fod i gael ei gwblhau erbyn Ebrill 2005.

Ond mae hefyd wedi bod yn flwyddyn sydd wedi rhoi prawf ar ein cyfrifoldebau rhyngwladol i'r eithaf. Rydym wedi cyfrannu at bump o gynadledau byd-eang, gan weithredu fel ymgynghorydd gwyddonol i ddirprwyaeth y DG a chydlynu'r holl adrodd a ddilynodd. Yn hyn o beth mae'r baich ar yr JNCC wedi bod yn enfawr, ond mae'r gallu i ddylanwadu ar ddeilliannau yn y digwyddiadau hyn lle gwnaed penderfyniadau allweddol wedi'n galluogi i wneud cynnydd mawr tuag at nodau cyffredin.

Ond yn bwysicaf oll y heb ymrwymiad ac ymroddiad staff JNCC ni fyddai dim o hyn yn bosibl. Yn ystod fy mlwyddyn gyntaf maent wedi gwneud argraff arnaf gyda'u harbenigedd, eu proffesiynoldeb a'u hymrwymiad i amcanion y JNCC.

Roedd ein hymgyngorwyr, er enghraifft, yn ymwneud yn uniongyrchol â sicrhau gwarchodaeth i'r heulforgi o dan y Cytundeb ar Fasnach Ryngwladol mewn Rhywogaethau o dan Fygythiad (CITES), rhywogaeth a fyddai fel arall yn wynebu diflaniad oherwydd gor-bysgota. Mae llawer o rywogaethau eraill o siarcod o dan fygythiad tebyg a gallai cyflawniad fel hyn osod cynsail ar gyfer gwarchodaeth yn y dyfodol. Bu i ni hefyd wneud yr achos yn llwyddiannus mewn cynhadledd y dylai'r Strategaeth

Planhigion Byd-eang gael ei derbyn gan aelod wladwriaethau o'r Confensiwn ar Amrywiaeth Biolegol. Ers hynny rydym wedi ymuno â'r Gerddi Botanegol Brenhinol yn Kew a Plantlife i geisio gweithredu hyn o fewn y DG.

Mae pwysau cynyddol ar yr amgylchedd yn golygu bod yn rhaid i'r Llywodraeth weithio yn agosach gyda'n cydweithwyr Ewropeaidd ar faterion sy'n peri pryder i ni ac mae integreiddio o'r fath bellach yn dechrau dwyn ffrwyth.

Yn unol â Chyfarwyddeb Cynefinoedd y GE, rydym wedi nodi rhestr derfynol o Ardaloedd Cadwraeth Arbennig arfaethedig (yACA) a'i chyflwyno i'r Comisiwn Ewropeaidd am ystyriaeth ynghyd â rhai aelod wladwriaethau eraill. Ar ôl sefydlu swyddfa i asiantaethau ar y cyd ym Mrwsel y llynedd, rydym hefyd wedi bod mewn sefyllfa dda i gyfrannu at ddatblygiad deddfwriaeth newydd, ac yn fwyaf nodedig diwygio'r Polisi Pysgodfeydd Cyffredin.



Drwy helpu i sicrhau consesiynau pwysig yn ymwneud â gwarchod morfilod a chynefinoedd tanddwr, rydym yn cyfrannu'n uniongyrchol i ddarlun llawer mwy – sef rheolaeth gynaliadwy o'n moroedd.

Mae'n thema sy'n mynd drwy lawer o'n gwaith a'n cyflawniadau yn ystod y flwyddyn. Fel y prif asiantaeth ar gyfer mapio, rydym wedi bod yn gweithio gydag amrediad o bartneriaid i greu darlun o'r rhywogaethau a'r cynefinoedd ym Môr Iwerddon. O'i gyfuno â data yn ymwneud â'r gweithgaredd masnachol a gweithgaredd dynol arall o fewn y môr rhanbarthol hwn, gallwn ddechrau creu darlun cyflawn o'r gofynion a osodir arno a datblygu agwedd holistig ar reolaeth gynaliadwy. Mae potensial enfawr ar gyfer gwaith tebyg mewn mannau eraill.

Rydym hefyd wedi parhau â'r broses o ddewis cyfres o safleoedd morol o bwysigrwydd o ran cadwraeth Ewropeaidd o fewn dyfroedd Prydain a helpu i sefydlu tîm rhyng-asiantaethol i gwblhau'r gwaith hwn. Yn gysylltiedig â hyn ceir ein hargymhellid ar gyfer ACA alltraeth cyntaf y DG ar ffurf y 'Darwin Mounds', rîff cwrel dŵr oer, a chefnogi Bae Caerfyrddin fel Ardal Gwarchodaeth Arbennig forol arfaethedig gyntaf Prydain fel cynefin heb fod ar gyfer magu i adar môr.

Mae'n amlwg fod yn rhaid i waith o'r fath gael ei seilio ar ymchwil gwyddonol cadarn ac unwaith eto rydym wedi cyflawni llawer yma, gan ddatblygu ffyrdd radical newydd o arolygu dosbarthiadau o adar môr a sefydlu fframwaith ar gyfer dethol, rheoli a gwarchod ardaloedd morol a warchodir o fewn gogledd ddwyrain Môr Iwerydd.

Bydd ar lefel o waith o'r fath angen ymgynghori gofalus ac ymrwymiad i weithio gyda'n partneriaid.

Fel y gwelwch, gosodwyd sylfaen gadarn ar gyfer cysylltiadau o'r fath. Rwy'n ddyledus i'm rhagflaenydd, Syr Angus Stirling, am gyflwyno sail mor gadarn i adeiladu arni.

Ond yn bwysicaf oll y heb ymrwymiad ac ymroddiad staff JNCC ni fyddai dim o hyn yn bosibl. Yn ystod fy mlwyddyn gyntaf maent wedi gwneud argraff arnaf gyda'u harbenigedd, eu proffesiynoldeb a'u hymrwymiad i amcanion y JNCC. Maent hefyd wedi gwneud i mi deimlo'n hynod gartrefol ac rwy'n falch o fod yn gweithio yn eu plith.

Dyma sy'n rhoi'r hyder mwyaf i mi yn nyfodol JNCC a'r rôl sy'n datblygu a chwaraewn mewn gwarchod natur yn y DG a thramor.

K. Bryan

Katharine Bryan



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