



Joint Nature Conservation Committee
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JNCC Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies Programme

www.jncc.gov.uk/page-4079

Half-yearly Newsletter No. 2

January 2009

Hi Everyone.

This is the latest update on happenings in the JNCC Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies Programme. We are sorry that in the next 6 months we are going to have to say goodbye to Wyn Jones, the JNCC OT and CD Programme Manager who will be retiring at the end of April. We wish him best of luck for the future. We also welcome a new member to our team: Nikki Chapman has been appointed as the Fundraising Officer for the OT programme, she introduces herself later in the newsletter.

If you have any comments/questions/queries, or have material that you would like in the next edition, please do get in touch.

Best wishes for 2009.

Tara

Tara Pelembe

JNCC Overseas Territories Officer

tara.pelembe@jncc.gov.uk

JNCC OT/CD programme

Contact: Wyn Jones OT and CD Programmemanager wyn.jones@jncc.gov.uk

The programme and its constituent projects continue to develop with I hope increased impact being recognised at individual Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies. However, given current financial constraints achieving this will become more of a challenge but unlike other programmes within JNCC we have been able to maintain our funding and staffing levels. These are limited and therefore we have look to novel and innovative ways to achieve the desired results. Our aim is to support you to make a difference to nature conservation at island level. The programme for the coming year can be found at www.jncc.gov.uk/page-4489

Retirement

On a personal note I have to announce that I will be taking early retirement at the end of April due to deteriorating health. This is a great shame because whilst I have spoken to most of you we have not met which I had hoped to do at the Cayman conference. As yet no decision has been made regarding my replacement but you will be informed when the announcement is made. Best wishes for the future and keep up the good work!

Wyn

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Project 1: Advice and communications

Visits: St. Helena and Ascension

Contact: Tara.Pelembe@jncc.gov.uk

In August 2008, Tara Pelembe visited Ascension and St Helena, to make links, open lines of communication, and explore opportunities for collaboration with various officials on both islands. The visits were very productive, and there are a number of areas of work being progressed. It is also important to highlight the range of excellent work that is happening on both islands, from the endemic plant propagation on Ascension to the marine monitoring on St Helena.



Majorie Fowler, Agricultural and Natural Resources Department Conservation Officer, demonstrating the work restoration work being done on the Peaks in St. Helena © Tara Pelembe

Visits: SBA Cyprus

Contact: Wyn.Jones@jncc.gov.uk

In October Wyn Jones visited the Sovereign Base Area Cyprus which is a unique Overseas Territory, at the invitation of Dr Ian Davidson-Watts Head of the Environment branch. Much good work is being done within the base area in terms of practical conservation and through the educational centre. All very challenging given military priorities. To add to the complexity under the terms of the treaty establishing the base areas their legal framework must mirror that of Cyprus. As a consequence of the Republic of Cyprus joining the European Union areas are to be designated for birds and habitats and other species consistent with the provisions of the EC Birds and Habitats Directives. The base already has a Ramsar site which was designated in 2003. My thanks go to Ian and his team to their welcome and hospitality.

Updates to web pages

Contact: tara.pelembe@jncc.gov.uk

The Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies section of the JNCC website has been updated. A greater range of information is now available, including documents for download and DVDs.

www.jncc.gov.uk/page-4079

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OCTs and Europe

Contact: Stephen.grady@jncc.gov.uk

European consultation looking towards modernising the OCT-EC association



In October, JNCC responded to the European Commission's public consultation on 'Future relations between the EU and the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs)'. This Green Paper provided interested parties with an early opportunity to express views on a number of proposed new approaches by the Commission to the OCT-EC association, notably to:

- move away from the traditional development cooperation approach;
- explore mechanisms to enhance the competitiveness of the OCTs, and
- better integrate trade in goods and services of the OCTs into regional and world economies.

JNCC's main points were:

- the Green Paper was limited in scope as it was focussed from the perspective of trade and development;
- to urge the Commission to ensure that sustainable development is at the core of any new approach to development cooperation;
- any new partnership arrangement to be agreed in 2013 must establish a new Overseas Association Decision that places environmental principles and sustainable development at its core;
- to note the lack of ability through the consultation to discuss i). the scope of relations between the relevant Member States and their OCTs, which is fundamental to the OCT-EC relationship, and ii). the appropriateness and adequacy of EU funding for the OCTs.

JNCC also noted the need for a flexible approach to accommodate the varied individual situations of the OCTs in their relationship with the EC. We highlighted that full recognition and protection of the environment, biodiversity and the ecosystem goods and services must underpin the goals of sustainable development. The environmental domains of mutual interest for cooperation between the OCTs and the EU highlighted were: climate change mitigation and adaptation; invasive alien species; marine issues e.g. illegal fishing; the associated economic benefits of recognising and valuing ecosystem goods and services, and the role of the OCTs in multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). For many of these issues, increased regional cooperation would be beneficial.

JNCC will continue to develop its thinking on these issues by working with UK Government and the UKOTs, and provide advice to Brussels through any further influencing opportunities.

More information including the official consultation documents and a catalogue of the responses can be found at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/development/how/consultation/index.cfm?action=viewcons&id=3841>

Defra funding

Contact: wyn.jones@jncc.gov.uk

JNCC was given much needed additional funds in September by Defra to be spent by the end of March 2009 to support work in the Overseas Territories. Details of the projects to be supported are being finalised and will be announced shortly.

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Project 2: Funding and research

Contact: Nikki.Chapman@jncc.gov.uk

New Funding post



Nikki Chapman has recently taken up the post of Fund Raising Officer at JNCC. Her first project is to identify existing, and negotiate new, funding streams for work that 'promotes measures that protect and enhance biological diversity' in the UK Overseas territories. She will help in compiling a comprehensive list of funding sources available for OT nature conservation, through research and working in close collaboration with OT personnel. It is hoped that this information will be collated by May 2009, and that input from OT personnel will help shape the final outputs so they will be of maximum value. The second aim is to provide guidance and support to OT personnel on the drafting and submission of the funding proposals as required. This will happen after May 2009 when all of the information has been collated.

Nikki Chapman © Cathy Gardner

Overseas Territories Research Programme:

Contact: Elizabeth.Moore@jncc.gov.uk

Following the identification of biodiversity conservation research priorities by the UK Overseas Territories (OTs), work has continued on the concept of a broad training and research programme with the University of Reading (see www.jncc.gov.uk/page-4113 for further details). The Programme's first Steering Committee meeting will be held at the end of January 2009.

JNCC will be making a contribution towards starting the training and skills development component of the programme, and an undergraduate studentship at the University of Reading will commence in September 2009. The UK Overseas Territories Association (UKOTA) will manage the studentship, advertising for applications from OT nationals in the New Year.

Falklands inshore marine project

For marine recorder information contact: Paul.Robinson@jncc.gov.uk

For marine advice contact: nikki.chapman@jncc.gov.uk

Despite an enormous area of Falklands Islands Territory being shallow waters, little is known about this habitat and there are few conservation measures in place to protect it. Threats and pressures to the shallow marine environment have recently begun to mount with a number of activities planned for the future, including offshore fisheries aquaculture, oil, inshore shipping, as well as whale watching and dive tourism. Falkland marine specialists based at the Fisheries department, Stanley, have implemented the Falkland Islands Shallow Marine Survey Programme (SMSP) which will provide baseline data about the wildlife of the shallow marine environment. It is hoped that this data will assist the Falklands Islands Government (FIG) to make informed decisions on the future management of their inshore marine resources.

Nikki Chapman (a benthic marine ecologist) joined marine specialists in the Falklands for a two week spell in December 2008. The focus of works will be on providing technical advice and general survey support, so that the classification of Falklands marine habitats, where possible, is standardised with that of the UK, i.e. The Marine Habitat Classification for Britain and Ireland (version 04.05). As a result, Falklands marine habitat types, distribution and condition data can be recorded in subsequent years with maximum efficiency. In addition this data can be compared and contrasted with existing historical data.

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JNCC has also assisted the SMSP in updating the Marine Recorder application that was developed by JNCC. Updates to the system were required in order to enable it to be used for locations beyond UK waters. The system will aid the project with data collation, storage, analysis and dissemination.

Project 3: Multilateral Environmental Agreements

Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)

Memorandum of Understanding on the conservation and management of marine turtles and their habitats of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia

Contact: Francesca.Marubini@jncc.gov.uk

The British Indian Ocean Territory hosts significant nesting populations of the hawksbill turtle *Eretmochelys imbricata* and of the green turtle *Chelonia mydas*; in addition, the territorial waters are part of the migratory and foraging ranges of the loggerhead turtle *Caretta caretta* and the leatherback turtle *Dermochelys coriacea*. To ensure the conservation of these species, the UK signed the Memorandum of Understanding on the conservation and management of marine turtles and their habitats of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia in 2002, on behalf of BIOT.



JNCC provides regular scientific advice to government for all activities related to this MoU; mainly updating the national report annually and representing the UK at the meetings of signatory states.

The 5th meeting took place in Bali in August this year, with 26 signatory states represented; in addition, the Republic of Yemen signed the MoU on this occasion and France, Mozambique and Papua New Guinea are expected to do so over the coming year. All official documentation relevant to this meeting can be accessed from the IOSEA website at www.ioseaturtles.org/iosea_meeting.php?id=15/.

Green Turtle © Anselmo Pelembe

A thorough review of implementation was presented by the IOSEA co-ordinator. The national reports (with site information) represent an extremely valuable source of information with public access. Overall conservation efforts have been maintained or increased; national networks or committees have been established in most countries providing an effective means for coordination of research and conservation activities. Delegates were given the opportunity of meeting at a sub-regional group level (Western Indian Ocean for BIOT) where discussions on regional threats and best practice were most prolific. Workshops on two of the main threats facing turtles in the region i.e. coastal development and fisheries-turtles interactions were an integral part of the meeting. A resolution urging for the implementation of existing FAO guidelines to promote the use of marine turtle by-catch reduction measures was passed. The UK will be part of an inter-sessional working group established to develop criteria to recognise 'IOSEA sites of special importance'; it is hoped that the first sites would be considered for selection at the next IOSEA meeting. The limited financial security of the Secretariat was also discussed at length and to minimise costs, meetings will be arranged on a biannual basis.



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Feedback from MEAs

Contact Vin.fleming@jncc.gov.uk

JNCC plan to hold an event in spring 2009 to provide feedback to UK stakeholders on the outcome of the various meetings of the Parties to the biodiversity Conventions that took place in 2008. These meetings included those of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Convention, the Convention on Migratory Species and the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement. In addition, other relevant meetings took place, for example, one which finalised an agreement on migratory African-Eurasian raptors and further discussions took place on a CMS agreement on migratory sharks.

The event, which will be timed to occur close to World Biodiversity Day in May, will not simply provide a report back from each meeting. Rather, the intention is to look at common and emerging issues arising across the Conventions (such as invasive species & wildlife diseases/zoonoses, ecosystem services, climate change, energy and biodiversity, and issues relating to islands), to have working groups discuss these, to look forward at our evidence needs for the next round of Convention meetings and discuss how to implement the various measures adopted.

We hope that OT & CD representatives will be able to attend this event and to contribute to the working groups most relevant to their interests. Further details will be provided in due course

Project 4: Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels

Contact: anton.wolfaardt@jncc.gov.uk



Black browed Albatross © Mark Tasker, JNCC

The UK South Atlantic Overseas Territories (SAOTs) are particularly important for the conservation of albatrosses and petrels. They are breeding range states to 12 of the 26 species currently covered by ACAP. For most of these, the SAOTs host significant proportions of the global breeding population, three of which are endemic as breeders to the Tristan da Cunha group of islands. The fourth meeting of ACAP's Advisory Committee (AC) took place in Cape Town in August 2008. The AC meeting was preceded by meetings of three of the four AC Working Groups, namely the Breeding Sites, Status and Trends and Seabird Bycatch Working Groups.

The meetings were well attended by representatives of the signatory states and observers, and were used to review and update the various work programmes. JNCC's Mark Tasker and Anton Wolfaardt participated in both the Working Group and Advisory Committee meetings. Progress was achieved in a number of important areas, including the development of a co-ordinated approach to interacting with Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs), the development of a prioritisation framework and indicators to measure the success of the Agreement, and agreement amongst Parties to propose the listing of the three north Pacific albatross species on Annex 1 of the Agreement at the next Meeting of Parties, which takes place in Bergen, Norway, in April/May 2009. Work will continue on these and many other activities inter-sessionally. The meeting report and the other official and supporting documentation

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relevant to the meetings (including the UK Implementation Report) are available at www.acap.aq. Work is also underway to finalise ACAP Implementation Plans for the SAOTs, and to develop a strategy to encourage and support conservation measures (principally seabird bycatch mitigation) both within the jurisdictional waters of the OTs and internationally. This outward looking strategy is essential given the wide-ranging movements of albatrosses and petrels.

Project 5: Sustainable Development

Climate Change

Deborah Procter, Climate Changer Adviser, Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

Contact: deborah.procter@jncc.gov.uk

In August Deborah Procter spent some time in the British Virgin Islands attending a workshop. "Enhancing capacity in the Caribbean UK Overseas Territories". This was designed to introduce the concepts of vulnerability and capacity assessment. The initiative is funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and enables the Caribbean OT's to link in to a wider Caribbean regional process funded by the Global Environment Fund (GEF). Whilst in BVI the National Parks Trust very kindly showed Deborah a number of their reserves, including the Ramsar site: Western Salt Ponds of Anegada. Her thanks to all those who made the stay both productive and enjoyable.

JNCC is co-organising a climate change session at the forthcoming OT conference on Cayman in May/June next year. The aim is to spend most of the time looking at what is being done to address the known and predicted impacts of climate change in individual territories. Shared experience of undertaking vulnerability assessments and developing national adaptation plans should help highlight what works well and what takes time to get set up. Some time will also be spent looking at the underlying science and, in particular, at the data needed to improve predictions relevant to a particular territory.

As ever, we are keen to hear from you: let us know what climate related work you are doing, and tell us if you think we could join forces and take forward climate change related work together.

Economic valuation

Deanna Donovan, Environmental Economics Adviser, Joint Nature Conservation Committee

Contact: deanna.donovan@jncc.gov.uk

Valuation work in the OTs has been proceeding apace with the production and distribution of the Centre Hills study from Montserrat, and the coral reef study on-going in Bermuda and scheduled for completion in the spring. JNCC would like to conduct a review of the environmental economics toolkit and associated workshops designed to communicate simply economic ideas, and have initiated discussions with the Department of Environment in Montserrat for this purpose. The objective is to learn how well the concept and utility of valuation has been communicated through the materials produced, and identify in areas in need of revision. Acknowledging the success of the JNCC DVD on climate change, presented at the conference in Reunion on climate change and biodiversity in overseas territories, and recognising that the support of policymakers is key for a successful valuation exercise, we have been investigating the possibility of developing a short video on economic valuation of the environment targeted at policymakers. We would appreciate your comments or suggestions in this context.

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Invasive species

David Stroud, Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

Contact: David.stroud@jncc.gov.uk

JNCC will be hosting a workshop on Invasives in the UKOTs on the 18th and 19th March 2009. All are welcome to attend.

List of events in the next six months.

If you have events that you would like to highlight in the next newsletter (coming out in June 2009) please get in touch with Tara.

| Date | Event | Weblink | Location |
|--|--|---------|--------------------|
| 18 - 19 March 2009 | Invasives in the UKOTs | | JNCC, Peterborough |
| TBC | Multilateral Environmental Agreements feedback meeting - | | London |
| 15 th - 22 nd May 2009 | South Atlantic Invasive Species Project workshop | | Ascension Island |
| 30 th May - 5 th June 2009 | UK Overseas Territories Conservation Forum Conference | | Cayman Islands |
| | | | |

Featured Photo

If you have a photo that you would like featured here, please send one in for the next edition.



Elephant Seals on Sea Lion Island (Falklands) © Dr Nikki Chapman, JNCC.

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