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## Global nature conservation advice

*JNCC provides authoritative,  
science-based advice on global  
nature conservation issues and  
plays a key role in international  
agreements and conventions*

The UK is a party to a range of multilateral agreements that directly or indirectly concern nature conservation. Some operate at a global level, others have a more limited geographical scope (see web links at the end of this section for further information).

JNCC provides scientific advice to Government on the development and implementation of multilateral agreements and supports Government at international conferences and meetings. We also advise Government and the country agencies on the implications of international agreements for nature conservation practice at national level.

Highlights from the reporting year include:

## Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)

During the year, JNCC continued to act as the UK's Scientific Authority for animals for CITES (the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew fulfils an equivalent role for plants). One aspect of this role involves providing advice to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) on applications for permission to import, export or use species listed under European Community CITES Regulations; during the reporting year we advised on 19,595 permits (equivalent to around 30,000 consultations).

As part of this process, JNCC has to decide whether to make "non-detriment findings" on imports of individual species, which establish that imports of specimens will not threaten the survival of that species in the wild. In many cases, source countries of CITES specimens do not possess the necessary capacity or information to allow a robust non-detriment finding to be made.

That was the situation with the trade in birds of prey from Guinea to the European Community. As a result, JNCC and Defra jointly commissioned Fauna & Flora International to undertake rapid field assessments of the distribution and relative abundance of raptors in Guinea. This project was the first occasion that JNCC has directly contributed to

field survey in a developing country in support of CITES. An additional benefit of the work was the provision of training for Guinean CITES authorities and bird traders on bird identification and care.

## Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)

Also known as the Bonn Convention, CMS was created to protect species that migrate across national boundaries. During the reporting year the CMS Scientific Council met in Germany, under the chairmanship of Colin Galbraith of Scottish Natural Heritage, and recommended a new international agreement to conserve migratory sharks, which are declining around the world. Preparatory work has been undertaken by JNCC during the reporting year for a CMS meeting on shark conservation later in 2007.

The Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) is one of a number of CMS subsidiary agreements to which the UK is a signatory. Supporting AEWA's objectives, *Waterbirds around the World* was launched in March and is a major contribution to the global conservation of waterbirds and their wetland habitats. The book was edited by JNCC's senior ornithologist David Stroud and colleagues from Scottish Natural Heritage and Wetlands International.



## View of Montserrat

(Far left) During the reporting year JNCC played a role in developing a new plant conservation strategy for the wider Caribbean region. A week-long workshop was held on the Overseas Territory of Montserrat in May during which JNCC's Chris Cheffings and other plant conservation specialists shared experiences of practical implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, which was adopted in 2002 under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

© Carole McCauley/Montserrat Centre Hills Darwin Project

## Slow loris *Nycticebus spp.*

(Left) During the year, JNCC began preparing its scientific advice on proposals to amend the appendices which had been submitted for consideration by the 14th Conference of the Parties to CITES, to be held in the Netherlands in June 2007. Slow loris *Nycticebus spp.* were subject to a proposal from Cambodia to transfer the genus from Appendix II to Appendix I.

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## Rüppell's griffon vulture *Gyps rueppellii*

The Rüppell's griffon vulture *Gyps rueppellii* is one of the 47 species recorded during the JNCC and Defra supported survey of raptors in Guinea, a project undertaken to provide a better understanding of the status in Guinea of raptors that occurred in international trade. The Rüppell's is a large vulture with a 2.4 m wingspan which, combined with its soaring behaviour, made the species readily observable in areas in which it occurred.

However, this species, like many other vultures, has undergone a significant decline in west Africa but the survey found a significant stronghold for this and other vultures in the Fouta Djallon Highlands of Guinea. Since the survey, steps have been taken to protect this area and, in November 2006, the Republic of Guinea designated the area as a sanctuary for vultures, the first of its kind in Africa.

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The volume pulls together the work of 451 expert authors from 59 countries, and builds on the *Waterbirds around the World* conference held in Edinburgh in 2004, which reviewed the protection, management and study of the world's waterbirds. The new book assesses the current situation and makes recommendations for action that should inform global waterbird conservation for years to come.

For details of JNCC's work in support of the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels, please see section 3.

## Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention)

JNCC's David Stroud made a continued contribution to the work of the Ramsar Convention's Scientific and Technical Review Panel, which is delivering an ambitious work plan set by the ninth Conference of the Parties in November 2005. Within the UK, JNCC is giving special consideration as to how the Ramsar Convention may be effectively implemented within the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, where it provides the main international

instrument for site protection. To this end, designation of Ballaugh Curragh in the Isle of Man as a Ramsar site in September 2006 highlighted wetland conservation issues on the island.

## Main conventions' websites

**Convention on Biological Diversity**  
[www.biodiv.org](http://www.biodiv.org)

**Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species**  
[www.cites.org](http://www.cites.org)

**Convention on Migratory Species**  
[www.cms.int](http://www.cms.int)

**Convention on Wetlands of International Importance**  
[www.ramsar.org](http://www.ramsar.org)

**World Heritage Convention**  
[whc.unesco.org](http://whc.unesco.org)



## Ballaugh Curragh

(Top left) Ballaugh Curragh is an area of wetland in the Isle of Man's northern lowlands. During the reporting year it became the first wildlife site on the island to gain international recognition through Ramsar designation. It comprises a mosaic of peatland habitats dominated by willow and birch – a habitat known locally on Man as 'curragh'.

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## Hen harrier

### *Circus cyaneus*

(Middle left) Ballaugh Curragh supports one of Europe's largest roosts of the hen harrier with up to 100 birds gathering there in winter.

© SNH

## *Paris polyphylla*

(Bottom left) China has approximately 10% of the known world flora within its national territory, which makes it a significant player in the conservation of global plant diversity. It is a priority country for implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, adopted by the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2002.

One pressure on plant diversity is the market in wild-harvested plants for use in traditional medicines, such as this *Paris polyphylla*.

In November, a workshop on the way forward for plant conservation in China was held in Beijing. The workshop was organised by Botanic Gardens Conservation International with help from JNCC and the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. One of the outputs of the workshop has been a draft China Plant Conservation Strategy, which follows the UK model in the way it translates the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation to a national level.

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