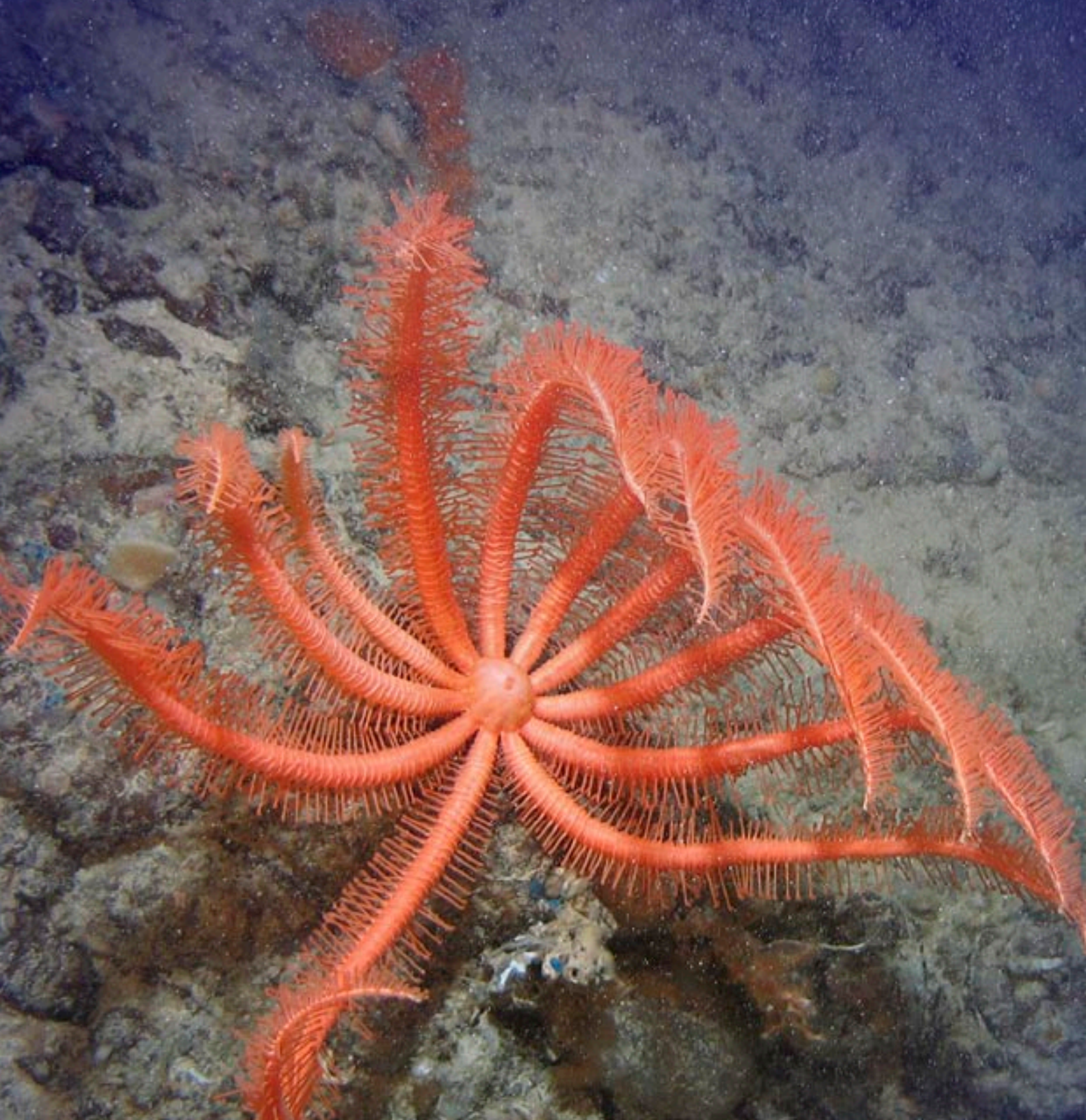


JNCC Annual Report 2008/09



JNCC are involved in the identification of Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, OSPAR Marine Protected Areas and new national Marine Protected Areas under forthcoming Marine Acts



- **2%** of UK seas are currently inside Marine Protected Areas
- By **2012** we aim to have an ecologically coherent network of Marine Protected Areas in the UK
- There are **4** Regional Marine Conservation Zone projects in England
- There are **81** SACs with Marine Components
- Darwin Mounds was the **first** offshore Marine Protected Area, closed to demersal fishing in 2003

Find out more at www.jncc.gov.uk/marineprotectedsites

Joint Nature Conservation Committee

Annual Report and Accounts 2008/09

Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in exercise of the powers conferred by paragraph 18(1) of Schedule 4 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed 15 July 2009.



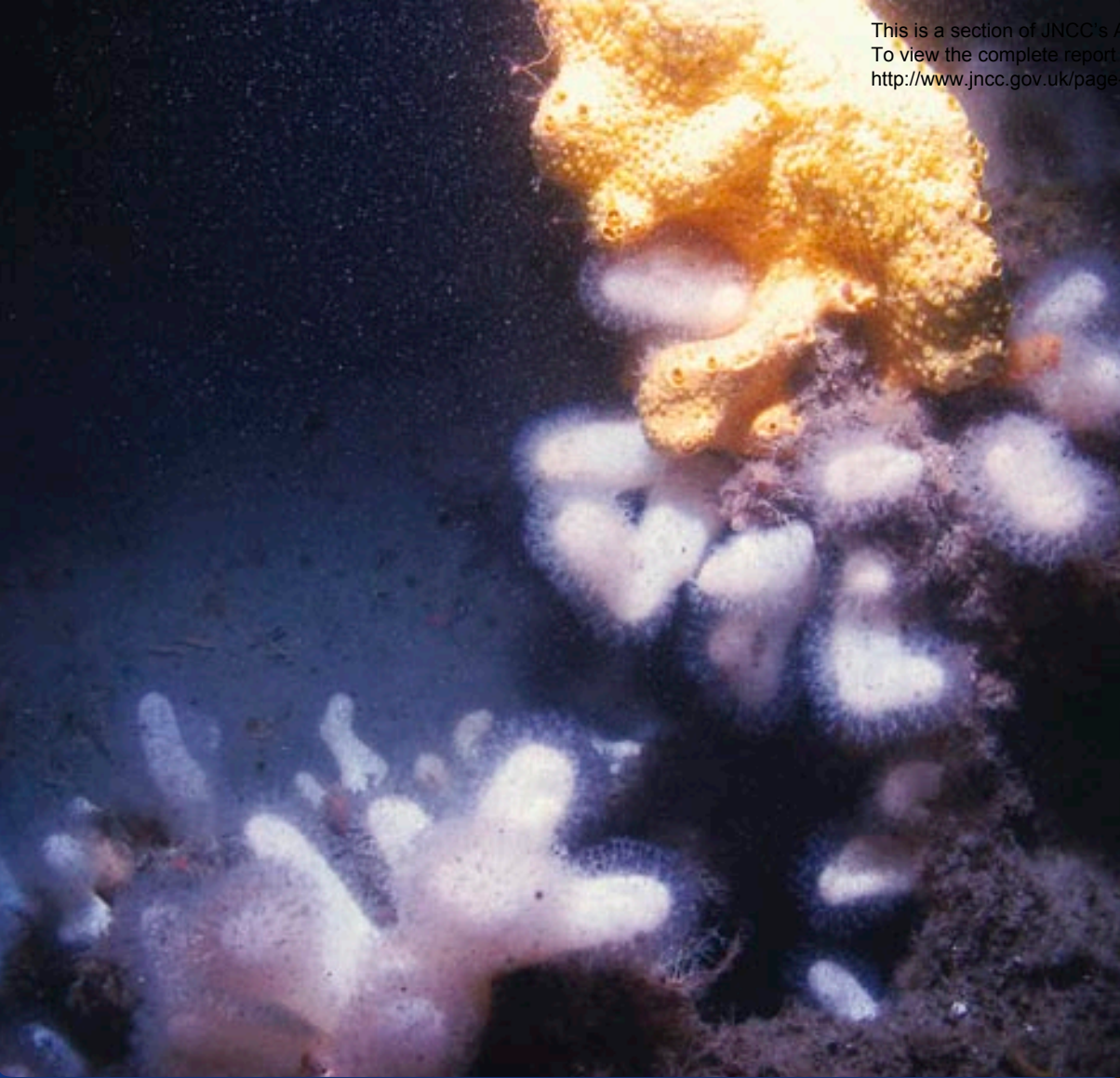
Brisingid seastar *Novodinia antillensis*

Front cover image

Deep water brisingid seastar photographed on Hatton Bank, 600km north-west of Britain. This photograph was taken on a survey jointly funded by Defra and the Department of Trade and Industry (now The Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform) Strategic Environmental Assessment programme to contribute to the identification of areas of potential reef. This survey supports the implementation of the EU Habitats Directive in UK offshore waters. The brisingid seastars live on cold-water coral reefs that are long-living, fragile and easily damaged by physical activity. Cold-water coral reefs are protected under the EU Habitats Directive.

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As ever, JNCC looks to be innovative with the design and execution of its **Annual Report**. This year, the front cover was created using an experimental technique we believe has not been used elsewhere, in order to bring out the colour of the marine organism that is our 'cover star'. Printed on a six colour 'Hexachrome' press, the usual orange ink used on this machine was replaced with a fluorescent orange, to further bring out the qualities of the brisingid seastar – making it seem like it is glowing. Having set the goal of attracting people's attention with our **Annual Report** covers, we think you'll agree that we have done so once again.



Soft corals *Alcyonium digitatum* and yellow boring sponge *Cliona celata* on a Methane Derived Authigenic Carbonate structure, Irish Sea

JNCC has a responsibility to identify marine protected areas in the offshore environment around the UK, and is investigating a number of areas of search as part of this work. One of these areas of search, an area of 'submarine structures made by leaking gases', was surveyed in the mid-Irish Sea. 'Submarine structures made by leaking gases' are an Annex I habitat under the EU Habitats Directive. Such structures may be formed from Methane Derived Authigenic Carbonate, or MDAC. MDAC is created when seabed sediments become bound together by

carbonate cement – a by-product of the microbial oxidation of methane rising up through the seabed, forming reef-like structures that provide a unique habitat for a wide range of marine life such as dead man's fingers *Alcyonium digitatum* and the hydroid *Tubularia sp.* The known occurrences of these MDAC structures are limited within UK waters; the findings from this work make a valuable contribution to JNCC's knowledge of this habitat's distribution in UK waters.

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Introduction to JNCC



The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) is the statutory adviser to Government on UK and international nature conservation, on behalf of the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside, the Countryside Council for Wales, Natural England and Scottish Natural Heritage

Vision for JNCC

JNCC will be recognised as a reputable provider of high-quality scientific evidence and advice relating to UK-wide and international terrestrial and marine nature conservation, working with the country conservation bodies.

Mission for JNCC

JNCC provides evidence and advice to assist the UK Government and devolved administrations in developing and implementing coherent domestic and international policies on the protection of natural resources as an integral part of sustainable development. The evidence and advice covers biodiversity and geodiversity issues which arise in one or more country within the UK and affect the interests of the UK as a whole, in the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, and, where appropriate, internationally. JNCC disseminates knowledge to foster understanding of these issues.

Through the support company, JNCC staff provide support to enable JNCC to advance its vision and mission.

Our strengths are:

- we operate at a UK level within a devolved UK;
- we have a strong culture of working with others and promoting collaboration;
- we work across multiple geographic scales, which strengthens our evidence base and our capability to deliver;
- we have, and draw together, a wealth of skills and knowledge on nature conservation in the terrestrial, freshwater and marine environments.

We will:

- contribute to the development of the UK, EU and global evidence base and identify future challenges to UK biodiversity and geodiversity

by gathering intelligence and assessing risk and opportunity;

- provide advice and long-term thinking on solutions to biodiversity and geodiversity challenges, and engage in, commission and deliver initiatives to address these challenges:
 - a. outside territorial waters;
 - b. in the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies; and
 - c. globally.



Recipients

The JNCC Annual Report 2008/09 has been presented to the following Ministers:

The Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP

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London SW1P 3JR

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A Question of Priorities Chair's Introduction

During the past year the Committee has worked together splendidly, in particular tackling a revision of JNCC's vision and mission, which are on page 4. I should like to acknowledge the work of all Committee members in reaching consensus on this, and especially a small task force which helped refine the product. Of course, such a result is only possible due to the work accomplished by many staff of the support company, and it has been a year in which staff have truly shown their professional nature.

This new vision and mission prepares JNCC for the challenges ahead, and has set a long-term direction. It reflects what UK Government and devolved administrations see as JNCC's main work areas, and we look forward to working with them to achieve the UK's national, European and international nature conservation objectives. Stakeholders have already offered strong support for our revised strategy, and have welcomed the clarity it brings to our future direction. It was approved by the Joint Committee in March 2009 and its priorities are already having an influence on the scope of JNCC's activities.

The new strategy sets out the following as a vision for the organisation: "JNCC will be recognised as a reputable provider of high-quality scientific evidence and advice relating to UK-wide and international terrestrial and marine nature conservation, working with the country conservation bodies."

While the word 'sustainable' does not appear in the vision as written, I have on several occasions drawn attention to the fact that properly managed and co-ordinated nature conservation is one of the keys to the UK achieving its sustainability objectives. Sustainable development is often seen as economic or social in orientation, but without nature conservation at its heart, no development can be sustainable! Our work on the UK footprint on global biodiversity is an excellent example here, where a small effort from the support company has produced excellent results. This study is ongoing, as part of our broader conservation outreach efforts.

A priority continues to be nature conservation in the marine environment. The sharp increase in activity has been reflected in an expansion of staff taking up the challenge that this developing area demands. Indeed, the appointment for the first time of a dedicated Marine Director demonstrates that we are ensuring we are 'fit for purpose' to help governments deliver their marine responsibilities.

It has been a key year in the cycle of international agreements, and we have also ensured more resources are made available for work in the Overseas Territories. We took part in a meeting organised by IUCN, the EU and French Government in 2008 which examined the needs, pressures and opportunities for EU Overseas Territories. France and the UK have the largest suite of such Territories, followed by Denmark and the Netherlands. Continuing co-operation between EU countries with such Territories will be essential to ensure this part of the EU's share of global biodiversity is managed and conserved most effectively. Our interests in this area also include the nearer Crown Dependencies, with which we have strengthening links.

JNCC is of course still involved at the heart of nature conservation in the UK, co-ordinating activities and ensuring there are appropriate common standards. We are also looking at some horizon scanning activities, in partnership with our country agency colleagues as appropriate. We continue to be responsible for the quinquennial review of the schedules of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, and it is with pleasure we noted Government's initial response to our recommendations in this area. Other key national initiatives included our work on formulating a surveillance strategy for terrestrial biodiversity, continuing our efforts in the area of environmental economics, and work on a UK Geodiversity Action Plan.

I hope you enjoy reading this *Annual Report*. One thing we can be certain of in the next twelve months is that continuing change in our economic and physical environments means our work will also continue to evolve – here the valuable efforts of the Inter-Agency Climate Change Forum, ably led by Professor Usher, is but one example. Finally, I should like to thank all members of the Committee for their work over the past year, and look forward to a year in which we make better efforts to stem the rate of loss of biodiversity, and enhance awareness and appreciation of both biodiversity and geodiversity. Next year, 2010, will be indeed the moment of truth when nationally and globally we see how well, or not, we have done in stemming that loss.



Peter Bridgewater
Chair, JNCC

Mater o Flaenoriaethau Cyflwyniad y Cadeirydd

Yn ystod y flwyddyn, mae'r Pwyllgor wedi cydweithio'n rhagorol, yn arbennig â'r gwaith o ddiwygio 'Gweledigaeth a Chenhadaeth' JNCC, sydd i'w gweld ar dudalen 4. Hoffwn gydnabod gwaith holl aelodau'r Pwyllgor wrth ddod i gytundeb cyffredinol, ac yn enwedig i'r grwp a ddatblygwyd y dogfen. Wrth gwrs, nid yw canlyniad ond yn bosibl oherwydd y gwaith a gyflawnwyd gan lawer o staff y Cwmni Cynorthwyo, a bu'n flwyddyn pan ddangosodd staff eu natur broffesiynol o ddifrif.

Mae'r 'Weledigaeth a Chenhadaeth' hon yn paratoi JNCC ar gyfer yr heriau sydd o'n blaenau, ac mae wedi gosod cyfeiriad hirdymor. Mae'n adlewyrchu beth mae Llywodraeth y DU a'r gweinyddiaethau datganoledig yn eu hystyried yn brif feysydd gwaith JNCC, ac rydym yn edrych ymlaen at weithio gyda hwy i gyflawni amcanion gwarchod natur cenedlaethol, Ewropeaidd a rhyngwladol y DU. Mae'r budd-ddeiliaid eisoes wedi cynnig cefnogaeth gref i'n strategaeth ddiwygiedig, ac wedi croesawu'r eglurder y mae'n ei roi i'n cyfeiriad ar gyfer y dyfodol. Cafodd ei chymeradwyo gan y Cyd-Bwyllgor ym Mawrth 2009, ac mae ei blaenoriaethau eisoes yn dylanwadu ar gweithgareddau JNCC.

Mae'r strategaeth yn datgan Gweledigaeth y sefydliad yn canlynol: "Bydd JNCC yn cael ei gydnabod fel darparwr dibynadwy o dystiolaeth a chynghor o safon uchel ynglŷn â chadwraeth dirol a morol ledled y DU ac yn rhyngwladol, gan weithio gyda'r asiantaethau gwarchod natur wledig."

Er nad yw'r gair 'cynaliadwy' i'w weld yn y Weledigaeth, yr wyf ar sawl achlysur wedi tynnu sylw at y ffaith fod gwarchod natur, sy'n cael ei rheoli a'i chydlynu'n gywir, yn un o'r allweddau i gyflawnu hamcanion cynaliadwydd y DU. Yn aml, ystyrir mai economaidd neu gymdeithasol yw gogwydd datblygu cynaliadwy, ond heb gwarchod natur yn graidd iddo, ni all unrhyw ddatblygu fod yn gynaliadwy! Mae ein gwaith ar ôl-troed y DU o ran bioamrywiaeth fyd-eang yn enghraifft ardderchog yn y cyswllt hwn, lle mae ymdrech fechan gan y Cwmni Cynorthwyo wedi deillio ar ganlyniadau ardderchog. Mae'r astudiaeth hon yn parhaufel rhan o'n cyhoeddusrwydd ehangach ar gwarchod natur.

Un flaenoriaeth barhaus yw gwarchod natur yn yr amgylchedd morol. Mae'r cynnydd sydyn mewn gweithgarwch wedi ei adlewyrchu mewn ehangiad yn y staff sy'n derbyn yr her y mae'r maes datblygol hwn yn ei gosod. Yn wir, mae penodi Cyfarwyddwr Morol pwrpasol am y tro cyntaf yn dangos ein bod yn sicrhau ein bod yn 'addas i'n pwrpas' o ran helpu llywodraethau i gyflawni eu cyfrifoldebau morol.

Bu'n flwyddyn allweddol yn y cylch cytundebau rhyngwladol, ac rydym hefyd wedi sicrhau bod mwy o adnoddau ar gael ar gyfer gwaith yn y Tiriogaethau Tramor. Buom yn cymryd rhan mewn cyfarfod a drefnwyd gan IUCN, yr UE a Llywodraeth Ffrainc yn 2008, a edrychodd ar yr anghenion, y pwysau a'r cyfleoedd ar gyfer Tiriogaethau Tramor yr UE. Mae gan Ffrainc a'r DU y nifer fwyaf o Dirioogaethau, gyda Denmarc a'r Iseldiroedd yn dilyn. Mae cydweithrediad parhaus rhwng y gwledydd UE gyda'r Dirioogaethau yn hanfodol i sicrhau bod gyfran yr UE o fioamrywiaeth fyd-eang yn cael ei rheoli a'i diogelu yn y modd mwyaf effeithiol. Mae ein diddordebau yn y maes hwn yn cynnwys Dibynwledydd agosaf y Goron ac mae ein cysylltiadau â'r rhain yn cryfhau.

Mae JNCC, wrth gwrs, yn dal i fod yn weithgar yng nghanol gwaith gwarchod natur yn y DU, gan gydlyn gweithgareddau a sicrhau bod safonau cyffredinol priodol yn bodoli. Rydym hefyd yn edrych ar rai gweithgareddau rhagweld, mewn partneriaeth â'n cydweithwyr yn yr asiantaethau gwledig fel y bo'n briodol. Rydym yn parhau i fod yn gyfrifol am yr adolygiad pum-mlyneddol o amserlenni'r Ddeddf Bywyd Gwylt a Chefn Gwlad, a bu'n bleser gennym nodi ymateb dechreuol y Llywodraeth i'n hargymhellion yn y maes hwn. Yr oedd y mentrau cenedlaethol allweddol eraill yn cynnwys ein gwaith ar lunio strategaeth gwyltadwriaeth ar gyfer bioamrywiaeth dirol, parhau â'n hymdrechion ym maes economeg amgylcheddol, a gwaith ar Gynllun Gweithredu Geoamrywiaeth ar gyfer y DU.

Gobeithio y byddwch yn mwynhau darllen yr **Adroddiad Blynyddol** hwn. Un peth y gallwn fod yn sicr ohono dros y deuddeg mis nesaf yw bod newid parhaus yn ein hamgylcheddau economaidd a ffisegol yn golygu y bydd ein gwaith hefyd yn parhau i esblygu – mae ymdrechion gwerthfawr y Fforwm Rhyngasiantaethol ar Newid yn yr Hinsawdd, sy'n cael ei arwain yn fedrus gan yr Athro Usher, yn un enghraifft o hyn. Yn olaf, hoffwn ddiolch i holl aelodau'r Pwyllgor am eu gwaith dros y flwyddyn ddiwethaf, ac rwy'n edrych ymlaen at flwyddyn lle byddwn yn gwneud gwell ymdrechion i atal cyflymder colli bioamrywiaeth, ac i gyfoethogi ymwybyddiaeth a gwerthfawrogiad o fioamrywiaeth a geoamrywiaeth. Y flwyddyn nesaf, 2010, fydd yr awr dyngedfennol pan fyddwn yn gweld, ar raddfa genedlaethol ac yn fyd-eang, pa mor dda, neu fel arall, yr ydym wedi atal y golled.



Peter Bridgewater
Cadeirydd, JNCC

Ceist a thaobh Phrìomhachasan Ro-ràdh a' Chathraiche

Thar na bliadhna a dh'fhalbh dh'obraich a' Chomataidh còmhla gu fìor mhath, gu h-àraidh ann a bhith ag ath-dheasachadh lèirsinn agus rùn an JNCC, a gheibhear air duilleag 4. Bu mhath leam obair gach ball dhen Chomataidh a mholadh ann a bhith a' tighinn gu co-aontachd mun seo, agus gu sònraichte am buidheann-gnìomha beag a thug loinn air an obair. Cha bhiodh a leithid air tachairt às aonais na h-obrach a rinn iomadh neach-obrach sa chompanaidh taice. 'S e bliadhna a bh' ann san do nochd an luchd-obrach cho proifeiseanta 's a tha iad nan dreuchd.

Tha an lèirsinn agus an rùn ùr seo ag ullachadh an JNCC airson nan dùbhlann a tha air thoiseach, agus tha e air an t-slighe sa cheann fhada a stèidheachadh. Tha e a' nochdadh na tha Riaghaltas na RA agus na rianachdan tiomnaichte a' faicinn mar phrìomh raointean obrach an JNCC, agus tha sinn a' coimhead air adhart ri a bhith ag obrachadh còmhla riutha gus amasan glèidhteachais nàdair nàiseanta, Eòrpach agus eadar-nàiseanta na RA a choileanadh. Thug luchd-compàirt taic mhòr mar-thà dhan ro-innleachd ùir againn, agus chuir iad fàilte air cho soilleir 's a tha i a' dèanamh na slighe a tha romhainn. Chaidh aontachadh leis a' Cho-chomataidh sa Mhàrt 2009 agus tha na prìomhachasan a' toirt buaidh mar-thà air farsaingeachd raon-obrach an JNCC.

Chuir an ro-innleachd ùr na leanas fa chomhair na buidhne mar lèirsinn: "Aithnichear an JNCC mar sholaraiche le deagh chliù a bheir seachad sàr fhianais agus comhairle air glèidhteachas nàdair aig muir 's air tìr air feadh na RA agus gu h-eadar-nàiseanta, ag obrachadh còmhla ri buidhnean glèidhteachais na dùthcha."

Ged nach eil am facal 'seasmhach' sgrìobhte san lèirsinn, tha mi air aire dhaoine a tharraing corra uair gu bheil glèidhteachas nàdair air a dheagh riaghladh is air a cho-òrdanachadh na phrìomh nì gus an RA na h-amasan seasmhachd a tha roimhpe a choileanadh. Thathar tric a' faicinn leasachadh seasmhach mar chuspair sòisealta no eaconamach, ach nas lugha na tha glèidhteachas nàdair na theis-mheadhan, cha bhi leasachadh sam bith seasmhach! Tha an obair againn air lorg na RA air bith-iomadachd cruinneil na deagh eisimpleir an seo, far an tàinig fìor thoradh bhon bheagan oidhirp a rinn an companaidh taice. Tha an sgrùdadh seo a' leantainn mar phàirt de dh'oidhirpean glèidhteachais nas fharsainghe.

Leanaidh glèidhteachas nàdair aig muir air adhart mar phrìomhachas. Air sgàth barrachd obrach an seo, tha barrachd luchd-obrach a' dol an sàs san raon dhùbhlach seo. Gu dearbh, tha dreuchd ùr Stiùiriche Mara a' sealltainn gu bheil sinn a' dèanamh cinnteach gu bheil sinn comasach air an obair gus riaghaltasan a chuideachadh ann a bhith a' libhrigeadh an cuid dhleastanasan mara.

Bha a' bhliadhna cudromach ann an cuairt nan aontan eadar-nàiseanta. Rinn sinn cinnteach gum biodh barrachd stòrasan ann dhan obair sna Tìrean Thall Thairis. Ghabh sinn pàirt ann an coinneamh a chuireadh air dòigh leis an IUCN, an AE agus Riaghaltas na Frainge ann an 2008. Thug seo sùil air feumalachdan, uallaichean agus air cothroman do Thìrean Thall Thairis an Aonaidh Eòrpaich. 'S ann aig an Fhraing is aig an RA as motha a tha dhe na Tìrean sin, agus an uair sin aig an Danmhairg is aig an Òlaind. Bidh co-obrachadh leantainneach còmhla ri Tìrean mar sin riatanach gus a bhith cinnteach gun stiùirear agus gun gleidhear cuid an Aonaidh Eòrpaich dhen bhith-iomadachd chruinneil cho math 's a ghabhas. Tha ùidh againn cuideachd sna Dùthchannan an Eisimeil a' Chrùin, agus tha sinn a' daingneachadh cheanglaichean riutha.

Tha an JNCC fhathast aig teas-meadhan glèidhteachas nàdair san RA, a' co-òrdanachadh obraichean agus a' dèanamh cinnteach gu bheil inbhe iomchaidh air am feadh. Tha sinn cuideachd a' coimhead air obair a thaobh sgrùdadh, ann an compàirt ri luchd-obrach bhuidhnean dùthcha mar a bhios iomchaidh, air cunnartan a dh'fhaodadh nochdadh. Tha uallach oirnn fhathast airson sgrùdadh gach còig bliadhna air clàran-obrach Achd an Fhiadh-bheatha is na Dùthcha. Thug a' chiad fhreagairt on Riaghaltas toileachas dhuinn a thaobh ar molaidhean san raon seo. Am measg iomairtean nàiseanta eile a th' againn, tha obair air ro-innleachd sgrùdaidh air bith-iomadachd air tìr, a' cumail oirnn a thaobh eaconamas àrainneachd agus ar n-obair air Plana-gnìomha Geo-iomadachd dhan RA.

Tha mi an dòchas gun còrd an **Aithisg Bhliadhnail** seo ribh. Faodaidh sinn a bhith cinnteach sa bhliadhna a tha romhainn gum bi ar n-obair an còmhnaidh ag atharrachadh air sgàth chùisean fiosaigeach is eaconamach – chan eil ann an obair luachmhor Fòram Eadar-bhuidhnean Atharrachadh Gnàth-shìde, fo stiùireadh an Àrd-oll Usher, ach aon eisimpleir dhen seo. Mu dheireadh, bu mhath leam taing a thoirt dhan Chomataidh airson na rinn iad sa bhliadhna a chaidh seachad, agus tha sinn a' coimhead air adhart ri bliadhna le barrachd oidhirp ga dhèanamh gus casg a chur air an ìre aig a bheil a' call bith-iomadachd, agus gus daoine a dhèanamh nas mothachaile agus nas measaile air bith-iomadachd agus geo-iomadachd. An ath-bhliadhna, 2010, gheibh sinn a-mach gu nàiseanta agus gu cruinneil, gu dè cho math 's a bha, no nach robh, sinn ann a bhith a' cur casg air a' chall sin.



Peter Bridgewater
Cathraiche, JNCC



Narrow-bordered five spot burnet moth *Zygaena lonicerae jocelynae*
Isle of Skye, Scotland

This is regarded as of Red Data Book status in Scotland – it is not known outside of the Isle of Skye. Also known as the Talisker burnet, it was part of the Quinquennial Review of Schedules 5 & 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 [see Chapter 6]. The other British subspecies *Zygaena lonicerae latomarginata* is widely distributed and locally common in England and the east of South Wales, hence it is not threatened and is not proposed

for legal protection. Recent evidence has been obtained of commercial collecting of larvae, for sale as livestock, at such a large scale as to be a significant threat to this subspecies. Previously, there had been no indication of damaging collecting or trade in British Burnet moths. The survival prospects of this subspecies will be improved by full legal protection.

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