

4

European nature conservation advice



JNCC provides advice on European policies that have an influence on conservation of biodiversity and geodiversity in the UK

The European Union (EU) acts across a wide range of policy areas, many of which have direct effects on nature conservation. The influence of the EU is particularly strong in the area of environment policy and legislation. As a result, almost all JNCC work now has a European element. The primary focus for JNCC advice is the UK Government, as an EU Member State and a key player in the EU decision-making process. We also provide advice to the devolved governments for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, as well as the country conservation bodies and, as appropriate, directly to EU institutions.

The overall aim of European work at JNCC is to ensure that nature protection is integrated across all policies and legislation developed in the EU. To influence the outcome of any EU initiatives effectively, JNCC gets involved with all interested parties as soon as possible in the development of policy.

Key to JNCC's success in this role are the UK Nature and Landscape Office in Brussels and the European Intelligence Service, which is provided by the Institute for European Environmental Policy. These services, run by JNCC in partnership with the country conservation bodies, jointly provide early intelligence and analysis of policy and legislative initiatives in the EU.

An important initiative supported by JNCC during the reporting year is the review of The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) led by Pavan Sukhdev, the Managing Director and Head of Global Markets of Deutsche Bank India. He was welcomed by JNCC Chair, Peter Bridgewater, as

**UK Nature and Landscape
Office (UKNLO)**
Brussels

The contract JNCC holds with the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP) is an example of how we work closely with other organisations to enhance the quality and breadth of intelligence, analysis and advice we are able to provide. The mechanism provides intelligence and analysis on EU policy for or affecting the environment, to JNCC and the country conservation bodies.

IEEP has offices in London and Brussels, and the UK Nature and Landscape Office, the Brussels base for JNCC and the country conservation bodies, is co-located with IEEP's office in Brussels, which provides excellent opportunities to facilitate the work of both organisations.

© Hugh Laxton/JNCC



guest of honour at an evening reception held in June 2008 at the residence of the UK Permanent Representative to the European Union in Brussels. The event, which was attended by officials from the European Commission, members of the European Parliament, EU Member State governments and other key organisations, as well as the chairs and chief executives of the UK country conservation bodies, was held during the European Commission's Green Week and reflected its theme "Only one Earth – don't waste it".

The TEEB project aims to provide a practical toolkit for policy makers linking science and economics. Mr Sukhdev suggested that only when we 'capture' the value of ecosystems and give them a price will

we be able to persuade society – and governments – to attach sufficient priority to protecting them.

JNCC also played an important role in the Streamlining European Biodiversity Indicators 2010 (SEBI) project as one of the consortium members of the European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity. The project has developed a suite of 26 indicators to measure progress towards the EU's target to halt the loss of biodiversity in Europe by 2010. They include indicators that measure pressures on biodiversity (such as nitrogen deposition), the state of biodiversity (for example, measures of species and habitat diversity) and responses (such as funding and public opinion).

Negotiations on climate change and energy dominated debate on EU environmental policy for much of the year. JNCC was actively engaged with the UK Government and the European Commission on the development of the EU's Renewable Energy Directive, and in particular, JNCC provided advice on sustainability criteria for biofuel and biomass production. JNCC was also involved in assessing future EU policy on adaptation to climate change.

JNCC also continues to advise Defra on the implementation of the EU Habitats and Birds Directives. The UK list of terrestrial Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), declared under the Habitats Directive, is close to completion and the first offshore marine candidate SACs were submitted to the European Commission in September 2008 (see Chapter 8).



Author of *The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity*, Pavan Sukhdev and JNCC Chair Peter Bridgewater

The residence of the UK Ambassador to the European Union, venue for the UKNLO reception

The mismatch between usefulness and value was identified by Adam Smith in 1776. "Water is very useful but not valued," he wrote, "while diamonds are given a high value but are not that useful."

Smith's thoughts on value open Pavan Sukhdev's preface to the interim report *The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity*, which was published in 2008. He notes that while nature is a source of much

value to human communities, it mostly bypasses markets and defies valuation. The lack of valuation is, he argues, an underlying cause for the degradation of ecosystems and biodiversity loss.

The project now aims to finalise a science and economics framework that will make ecosystem valuation a practical tool. It also hopes to provide a toolkit for policy makers.

@veldeman-photo-brussels.be



Red-ruffed lemur *Varecia rubra*
Masoala National Park, Madagascar

Among the case studies of the TEEB report is an analysis of the ecosystem benefits derived from the forests of Masoala National Park in Madagascar. It puts estimated value on the 'services' the forest provides including recreation where thousands of tourists visit the forest to see red-ruffed lemurs *Varecia rubra* and other unique flora and fauna, valued at some US\$ 5,160,000. Other 'services' are:

- **Medicines:** Rainforest plants have potential as medicines. For example, one species of periwinkle is used as a source of an anti-cancer drug. US\$ 1,577,800;

- **Erosion control:** Forests protect against soil erosion, preventing silting of rice paddies and fish nurseries. US\$ 380,000;
- **Carbon storage:** Thriving forest reduces the impact of climate change. US\$ 105,110,000;
- **Recreation:** Thousands of tourists visit the forest to see red-ruffed lemurs *Varecia rubra* and other unique flora and fauna. US\$ 5,160,000;
- **Forest products:** Local families use forest products each day, including foods and materials for building and weaving. US\$ 4,270,000.

© Nick Garbutt/naturepl.com