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JOINT NATURE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH MEETING OF THE JOINT NATURE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE, HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20 MARCH 2002 AT MONKSTONE HOUSE, PETERBOROUGH.

Present:

Sir Angus Stirling (Chairman)
Mr Cameron
Sir Martin Doughty
Dr Faulkner
Professor Heal
Mr Lloyd-Jones
Dr Markland
Dr Moser
Professor Pentreath
Mr Scott

In attendance:

Miss Bigger (Secretary)
Dr Brown
Professor Crofts
Dr Galbraith
Dr McLean (items 8 and 12)
Dr Mortimer (item 10)
Mr Steer
Mr Tasker (item 9)
Mr Thomas
Dr Vincent
Mr Yeo

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15. AOB

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Professor Warren and Professor Crawley.
- 1.2 A presentation was made to Professor Crofts, who will retire as Chief Executive of Scottish Natural Heritage at the end of March. The Committee thanked Professor Crofts for his commitment and contribution to Joint Committee business since it was established. Chairman reminded Committee that Professor Crawley would also be leaving and advised that a gift would be sent to him.
- 1.3 Mr Thomas, new Chief Executive of the Countryside Council for Wales, and Dr Brown, Acting Chief Executive of English Nature, were welcomed to the Committee as new attendees. Professor Ingram, who will be joining the Committee in April 2002 as an independent member, was also welcomed to Committee as an observer. Chairman welcomed observers to the third open meeting of the Committee.
- 1.4 The Chairman welcomed Lynsey Bigger, the new Committee Secretary, to her first meeting.

2 Amendments to the minutes (JNCC 02 P02)

- 2.1 It was noted that in paragraph 7.2 (ii) 'encouraged' should replace 'explored' and in paragraph 7.2 (iv) 'and countries' should be included after 'with partner organisations'. The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed subject to the amendments listed and discussed.

3 Matters arising (JNCC 02 07)

- 3.1 A short paper was presented on matters arising from the December meeting. This reported progress relating to the biological translocation policy and

advised that English Nature would provide a verbal update on progress relating to the selection of SACs for degraded raised bogs.

- 3.2 On the issue of degraded raised bogs, Sir Martin Doughty advised that English Nature had reached a deal with Scotts to acquire ownership of three possible SACs: Wedholme Flow, Thorne Moor, and within two years at Hatfield Moor. Peat cutting would stop immediately at Wedholme Flow and Thorne Moor, and within two years at Hatfield Moor. Restoration work would be undertaken by Scotts, and it is hoped that this, together with the development of amenities such as a visitor centre, would help to maintain employment levels. Mr Michael Meacher had played a prominent role in the campaign and had provided English Nature with substantial additional public funding for the purpose.
- 3.3 Dr Brown added that as a result of this deal, English Nature had succeeded in reducing peat extraction in England by 60%. Since the meeting in November 2001 between English Nature, JNCC and the Peat Producers Association, further reports had been received from Richard Lindsay and the Peat Producers Association. English Nature hoped to provide advice to government on the selection of SACs for degraded raised bogs within the next few months. Dr Brown noted that the Peat Producers Association had been renamed the Growing Media Association.
- 3.4 Committee noted the paper and thanked English Nature for the verbal update. In discussion, the following points were raised:

Biological Translocation Policy

- i. Mr Scott reminded the Committee that he thought the term 'habitat translocation' was a conceptual absurdity.

4 JNCC Corporate Plan for 2002/03 and forward look to 2005/06 (JNCC 02 P04)

- 4.1 Mr Steer introduced the paper, which described the changes made to the JNCC Corporate Plan since the Committee meeting in December 2001. Mr Steer thanked the country agencies for their valued input and stated that he expected JNCC would receive an additional £250,000 from DEFRA to support the implementation of FMPR recommendations.
- 4.2 Several adjustments have been made to the proposed work programme to bring the budget in line with the anticipated Grant in Aid of £5.1 million and these were highlighted in Annex A of the paper. The targets affected by these adjustments remain in the final draft of the Corporate Plan but are shaded grey; the shading will be removed from the published version of the Plan. Work relating to these targets may be postponed to the following year or may be undertaken over a longer period. Retaining flexibility in the work programme is key and the Support Unit will endeavour to respond to changing priorities over the Plan period.

- 4.3 Drafting of the Corporate Plan was complete with the exception of the Welsh translation of the Executive Summary and the addition of the index.
- 4.4 In discussion, the following points were raised:
- i. The final draft of the Corporate Plan, illustrating areas that had been adjusted since December, was noted. Committee praised the clarity and presentation of the Plan, but noted that Chapter 8 (High-level objectives and key targets) would be better placed near the beginning of the document. It was unfortunate that certain areas of work had to be scaled down, but Committee understood that this was necessary. The emphasis on flexibility was welcomed and Committee agreed that this was an important element of the work programme, especially as the Corporate Plan incorporated a forward look to 2005/06, allowing time to implement changes if feasible.
 - ii. The scaling down of work on 'favourable conservation status' is an area that would have a fundamental impact on other work such as defining the priorities for managing the Natura 2000 site series. It is an important area for each of the country agencies and JNCC should capture and make use of work being undertaken on this issue by the agencies. Although work on favourable conservation status has been scaled down for 2002/03, JNCC is committed to taking it forward as soon as possible, and a one-year stagiaire post based with DG Environment has recently been trawled to assist with developing thinking on monitoring Natura sites across the EU. The Committee expressed concern at any loss of an overall UK perspective on the development of the definitions of "favourable conservation status" and urged that this matter should continue to be given as high a priority as possible within the scaled-down budget.
 - iii. The development of practical advice on the Convention on Biological Diversity ecosystem approach is a fundamental part of the work programme, which could have long-term benefits in the UK and would be particularly useful to the country agencies. JNCC's work programme should reflect the shift adopted by the conservation community towards a wider, more holistic approach, promoting sustainability. The proposed work on Article 10 of the Habitats Directive is also relevant here.
 - iv. Providing technical support and advice on land use policy through the Land Use Policy Group (LUPG) is essential, but JNCC involvement is relatively limited, as most of the work is undertaken by the country agencies. It is important to direct JNCC to areas where it can add value.
 - v. The survey and monitoring programme utilises a significant proportion of JNCC's budget and needs to be kept under review to ensure that resources are used most effectively. Additional expenditure in this area needs to be the subject of careful consideration.

- vi. Other work areas which have been scaled back, but which were felt to be important, included: developing a process to assess the conservation status of UK species; contributing to the work of Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF); and promoting soil conservation.
- v. A certain amount of flexibility within the work programme is essential but additional work has become, necessarily over time, part of JNCC's 'core' programme and has eroded some of this flexibility. Savings in the 2002/03 work programme need to be achieved, and it has proved difficult to disengage quickly enough from some areas in order to shift resource to higher priority work. Where possible, 'grey' areas will be reintroduced to the main programme over the year.
- vii. It was recognised that work currently underway to develop the JNCC risk register should be linked with the Corporate Plan to ensure that scaling down of the work programmes does not expose JNCC to greater risk.

4.5 Committee endorsed the final draft of the Corporate Plan, subject to the comments and points raised.

5 The 2002 Spending Review: preparing a submission on behalf of JNCC (JNCC 02 P05)

- 5.1 Mr Yeo presented this paper, which outlined anticipated priorities for JNCC over the next three years and consequent changes in programme funding levels, as requested at the December 2001 Committee meeting.
- 5.2 The Government is currently conducting a Spending Review to determine what resources are required for 2003/04 to 2005/06. This provides a window of opportunity for JNCC to consider priorities and projected expenditure in line with the statement of strategic direction. Each country agency has a different timetable for submission to the Spending Review, but it is hoped that the work undertaken by the Support Unit will assist the country agencies in making submissions on behalf of JNCC. The work produced by the Support Unit takes into account the anticipated changes associated with implementation of the FMPR.
- 5.3 Grant in Aid figures for 2002 have been used as a baseline and over the next three years the projected budget rises to £7.08 million, an increase of 32%. The planned increases are not distributed evenly across the seven programmes. The largest increases are associated with new and developing areas of work as identified in the statement of strategic direction, acknowledging that further work is required to refine the strategy.
- 5.4 In discussion, the following points were raised:
 - i. Some members felt that the spending forecasts were over-optimistic in the light of known government priorities, and would not be achieved.

However, after discussion it was agreed that it was right to present the JNCC's strategic overview as set out in the paper, particularly since the total grant-in-aid required was a very small sum in public expenditure terms. It would be essential to maintain as much flexibility in managing work programmes as possible.

- ii. A shift in emphasis towards the marine environment is anticipated and this is acknowledged in the paper. There needs to be further consideration of priorities for marine work.
- iii. To gain support from government, priorities should be linked to PSA targets. It is crucial to engage departments and the devolved administrations in dialogue. The priorities identified by JNCC should be communicated to government to highlight the problems associated with losing key targets from the work programme. It would be prudent to focus attention on the projected figure of £7.08 million as opposed to an increase of 32% as this sum may seem more reasonable in comparison to other demands on Departmental resources.
- iv. The JNCC does not bid directly to government as part of the Spending Review and cannot require the agreement of country agency bids at Committee, but it is hoped that the country agencies will make bids on JNCC's behalf based on the information presented in the paper. Direct funding from government for some aspects of JNCC's work is desirable but negotiations on this aspect are ongoing and have yet to be agreed. Consequently, it is important that all JNCC's work is included within the one document at this time.
- v. English Nature has made a submission to DEFRA on behalf of JNCC that reflects a rate of increase of 15% year on year. However, signs point to flat resources for the next three years and, therefore, English Nature does not anticipate a big increase in funds available for nature conservation. Scottish Natural Heritage has bid for an additional £1m to support the forward work plan. The Countryside Council for Wales has yet to make a submission to the Welsh Assembly due to the different timetables adopted in Wales. However, funds for the next three years have already been agreed and extra resources, unless for specific work areas, are unlikely to be approved. In future, Committee will endeavour to discuss country agency submissions on behalf of JNCC in good time to meet deadlines.
- vi. Committee felt that greater emphasis should be placed on seeking alternative sources of funding for the JNCC. It is important to be innovative at a time when an increase in resources from government for nature conservation looks unlikely.

5.5 Committee endorsed the broad priorities outlined in the paper, subject to the points raised, and requested that appropriate submissions be made by the country agencies on behalf of JNCC. Committee agreed that at a subsequent meeting, a paper should be presented on alternative funding

sources for JNCC, and that further consideration be given to JNCC's contribution to sustainable development and on priorities for marine work and for monitoring and surveillance.

6. FMPR – update on progress made and outline action plan (JNCC 02 P01)

- 6.1 Mr Steer introduced the paper, which updated Committee on progress made since the FMPR Steering Group meeting at the end of January 2002, and considered the future organisational framework of the JNCC, offering two preferred models. Mr Steer tabled an additional paper outlining progress on the FMPR action plan developed by the Support Unit since the Steering Group.
- 6.2 The two preferred options for an organisational framework are a company limited by guarantee or an incorporated public sector model. The process is now at a stage where a decision is required on which of the two models should be adopted. The next Steering Group meeting is scheduled for 29 April 2002 at which it is hoped that agreement will be reached on the option to be recommended for Ministerial approval. Legal advice sought by the Support Unit suggests that either of the models would be feasible, but ministerial approval would clearly be required. At the last Steering Group, DEFRA asked JNCC to investigate the public sector model in light of the introduction of the Regulatory Reform Act, which may permit the legislative changes required to establish this type of body. The public sector model would be easier for the Support Unit to operate in areas such as pensions. The country agencies would retain ownership in both models.
- 6.3 The new organisational framework should allow JNCC to employ staff on a single set of terms and conditions and enable JNCC to contract services directly.
- 6.4 Mr Steer recommended that the country agencies might wish to review the Regulatory Reform Act and the action plan produced by government in respect of the implications it may have for nature conservation. The Act has a UK remit.
- 6.5 In discussion, the following points were raised:
 - i. Committee welcomed and supported wholeheartedly the action taken by the Support Unit to move the process forward. DEFRA should be pressed to make a recommendation on one of the organisational options in order that work on implementation of the agreed framework can start as soon as possible. Country agency representatives at the next Steering Group meeting should assist in driving the meeting to reach agreement on a recommendation. Chairman will seek a meeting with the Minister before his departure from Committee to agree a timetable for implementation.
 - ii. It would be useful to explore the pros and cons of each model to ensure the right choice is made and to highlight possible areas of difficulty

during implementation. It is important to ensure that a single set of terms and conditions for staff are established, but the possibilities that currently exist for exchange of staff with the country agencies should be maintained and not undermined.

- iii. Focus should be placed on establishing a new organisational framework that will deliver the strategy. Development of the statement of strategic direction is currently underway within the Support Unit. Engagement with relevant government departments and administrations is anticipated over the next few months with the intention of summarising the key issues at June Committee and approving the revised statement in September. However, it was suggested that the statement of strategic direction might need to take into account the outcome of the Spending Review, and therefore final approval might have to be postponed to the December Committee meeting.
- iv. The Committee noted that the model for JNCC as a 'company limited by guarantee' would need to be refined to remove the ambiguity about who would be members and directors in the proposed new structure. SNH noted that it would need further clarification as to why the other incorporated public sector model was not, in fact, an NDPB by another name.

6.6 Committee noted progress made and agreed that country agency representatives would support urgent approval of a recommended organisational structure at the next Steering Group in April 2002.

7. World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) (JNCC 02 P03)

7.1 Dr Vincent introduced the paper, which provided an update on the preparatory process for the Summit, as requested at the December Committee, and highlighted some examples of biodiversity targets that JNCC could communicate to government, and possibly the EU, in support of UK priorities for the Summit. The December Committee meeting noted that it would be difficult to influence the outcome of the Summit because of the global and open nature of proceedings. It was likely that the outcome would be heavily influenced by discussions between the major developed countries and the developing countries would have most influence over the outcome. It is envisaged that JNCC will not spend much more time on this topic unless required by government, as the outcome is not likely to warrant the investment in resources.

7.2 In discussion, the following points were raised:

- i. Committee welcomed the paper, noting that it was useful to see the preparatory elements of the process together in one document. The internal process adopted for informing Committee about the WSSD was both effective and informative and should be implemented when considering issues relating to JNCC's work for the main conventions,

for example Ramsar and CBD. This would permit Committee to consider UK input into the discussions at, for example, forthcoming Conferences of the Parties. There is also a need to disseminate information back to the country agencies following meetings.

- ii. The focus of the Summit is likely to be on issues which are key to developing countries, such as sustainable development and methods of alleviating poverty. It is important to recognise that it will be difficult to promote biodiversity and environmental issues within the sustainability agenda, especially as there are many other international conventions in place to support conservation and further work in the JNCC on this issue should therefore be restricted accordingly.
- iii. It was considered that the proposals suggested in Annex 1 of the paper were necessarily tentative given that JNCC had limited expertise in some of these areas. It would be for others to refine them and take them forward if they so wished.
- iv. The last ten years have witnessed a huge effort to develop the biodiversity conservation agenda and it would now seem appropriate to consolidate and enforce Conventions and Directives that the government has already signed up to, especially as it is uncertain how productive the forthcoming Summit will prove in terms of new conservation initiatives. JNCC needs to ensure that further engagement with government on this topic is productive, the resulting implications are clear and that government consults widely on the cost implications of ratifying outcomes.

7.3 Committee endorsed the work done by the Support Unit on WSSD and commended that the ideas set out in the paper should be forwarded to government where appropriate. The process followed to enable the Committee to consider and discuss the WSSD would be appropriate for other major summits and conventions.

8. Fourth Quinquennial Review of Schedules 5 and 8 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981: Recommendations from the Working Group (JNCC 02 P06)

- 8.1 Dr Vincent introduced the paper which presented a summary of the work carried out to review schedules 5 and 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. Dr Vincent thanked the Working Group for their assistance in the formulation of recommendations, especially in light of the tight timescales, and requested that Committee reach a decision on the recommendations at the meeting or soon afterwards. Advice will then be submitted to DEFRA and devolved administrations.
- 8.2 The public consultation from December 2001 to February 2002 had considered the outcome of preparatory work and recommended that no changes be made to schedule 8 of the Act relating to plants. However, the Review Group had recommended increased protection for 9 species of animals

(including 7 marine fish) under schedule 5. The Working Group did not recommend deletion or reduction in the level of protection of any species currently listed on the schedules.

8.3 Dr Ian McLean was available during the meeting to answer technical questions.

8.4 In discussion, the following points were raised:

- i. Committee welcomed the paper, commending the simplified process adopted when undertaking the review. Committee supported the recommendations made but made a number of observations, which need to be considered in the formulation and implementation of the Committee's advice to Government.
- ii. The Review Group recommends five elasmobranchs for addition to Schedule 5 and it needs to be clear how scheduling would assist in controlling bycatch of these species. It was noted that scheduling forbids the sale of bycatch, and requires reasonable measures to be taken to avoid incidental killing of the protected animals; this provides a strong incentive for fishermen to return the species, which are fairly resilient, to the sea following incidental capture. Numbers have declined seriously over the past few years, and it is essential to afford the correct level of protection. An education programme for the fishing industry should be promoted to complement the introduction of these species to the schedule.
- iii. Further survey and biological recording work would improve our knowledge of the distribution of some species recommended for increased protection, for example the Spiny Seahorse, although the Committee agreed that protection was needed for these species.
- iv. A review of the Act three years ago confirmed that it was still effective but improvement was required to Part 1. It is important to ensure that the Act retains its worth and this should be reviewed regularly with government.

8.5 Committee endorsed the recommendations made by the Working Group concerning changes to Schedule 5 and agreed their submission to the Secretary of State and devolved administrations. Committee considered that the education of, and consultation with, key parties (e.g. the fishing industry) is essential in order to reap the benefits of adding new species to the Schedules.

**9. Process for completing the Marine Natura 2000 site series (JNCC 02 D01)
Marine Natura Beyond Territorial Waters (JNCC 02 D03)**

9.1 Two papers were prepared for discussion, one by Dr Vincent and Mr Tasker and a second by Professor Crofts.

- 9.2 Dr Vincent presented the first paper, which considered the position regarding the identification of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) in the offshore and inshore environments. The paper examined work currently being undertaken to identify sites, and proposed a process for completing the site series. It suggested that work should be undertaken by a JNCC-led Project Group comprising staff from the Support Unit and the country agencies. Professor Pentreath has offered to Chair the Group. The Group would receive direction from a DEFRA-led Steering Group, and due to the scientific complexities involved, would need to liaise with external bodies. It is intended that advice from the Project Group would be presented to Committee for approval; Committee would then advise Ministers. The paper noted that designation of marine SPAs and SACs is mandatory, not discretionary. Responsibility for regulatory activity will fall on member states and the European Commission.
- 9.4 Professor Crofts presented his paper, which did not conflict with the paper produced by Dr Vincent and Mr Tasker but noted that designation of marine SACs and SPAs was a substantive topic and warranted extensive debate. The paper highlighted concerns about the adoption of terrestrial designation criteria for marine sites, and in particular for wide-ranging species. It agreed that the designation of protected areas was mandatory but noted that it was important to ensure that the distinctive characteristics of the marine environment are taken into account. Designation, in itself would do little to protect marine biodiversity, and it is difficult to take forward designation until there was greater clarity on what protection mechanisms might be available within the Marine Natura sites. The designation process and scale of sites should therefore be tailored to the appropriate protection mechanism, set within a greater clarification of the needs of marine ecosystem level conservation.
- 9.5 In discussion, the following points were raised:
- i. Committee welcomed both papers, and agreed that Professor Pentreath should lead the proposed JNCC Project Group. Committee noted that the first paper outlined well the available mechanisms for designating marine sites but that Professor Crofts' paper made a valid point in highlighting that these mechanisms will not necessarily achieve the necessary protection.
 - ii. In most cases, designation of terrestrial SACs and SPAs focuses on site and species factors but it is important in the marine environment to consider the whole ecosystem and link this to a more holistic approach. There are factors associated with the marine environment that make it difficult to define criteria for designating sites and to implement protection measures.
 - iii. It is essential to encourage wider debate on the topic and seek the views of other environmental groups to ensure that all available expertise contributes to the development of selection guidelines and the identification of the most suitable sites. It will be necessary to

consider the marine Natura series within the whole context of marine conservation efforts, and also to ensure that key stakeholders, including the European Commission, are brought into this debate. This work should proceed in parallel to the completion of the marine Natura site series. The continued involvement of specialists from the country agencies is welcome and essential.

- iv. A Regional Seas pilot scheme, supported by JNCC, will start in May 2002 to look at marine nature conservation on a whole ecosystem basis for the Irish Sea. The project is anticipated to last 12-18 months and should provide good data on which to base other assessments.

9.6 Committee agreed to adopt the suggestions outlined in the paper produced by Dr Vincent and Mr Tasker, subject to the points raised. The Project Group should consider how best to progress the debate in the context of marine sites within the wider environment, and to report back to Committee.

10. Water Framework Directive: Implementation in the UK and key issues for the conservation agencies (JNCC 02 D02)

- 10.1 Dr Mortimer presented the paper, which summarised the main provisions of the Water Framework Directive and described the steps that are being taken to implement it within the UK. The paper commented on the involvement of JNCC and the country agencies and noted various issues arising from implementation of the Water Framework Directive. A timetable outlining the key requirements for implementation, and a diagram of the groups involved in the process, were annexed to the paper.
- 10.2 There are several issues that will require liaison between the environment and conservation agencies, in particular to ensure that implementation of the Habitats Directive and Water Framework Directive is co-ordinated. Additionally, through the Land Use Policy Group (LUPG), the conservation and environment agencies will need to explore how land use practices within river catchments impact on water quality.
- 10.3 In discussion, the following points were raised:
 - i. Committee welcomed the paper and the informative presentation by Dr Mortimer, which was a useful preface to the June Committee meeting in Somerset. The field visit in June will be based around the Water Framework Directive and will attempt to bring to life many of the issues, for example, the implications of the Directive for surveillance and monitoring programmes.
 - ii. The Water Framework Directive has a broad scope and will impinge on various areas of work such as surveillance programmes. It incorporates several other directives on surface waters and because of the protracted timetable, provides an opportunity to look at monitoring

with the aim of simplifying procedures and reducing the cost of monitoring and surveillance work.

- iii. It was noted that implementation of the Directive is relevant to coastal and estuarine environments, and should therefore be considered in relation to marine Natura sites.
- iv. The role of the Support Unit and the Committee in the process is not clear at present but discussions at the June meeting should clarify this issue and enable the JNCC to be incorporated into the diagram at Annex B.
- v. Scottish Natural Heritage are currently engaged in discussion with SEPA regarding River Basin Management Plans and it is important that English Nature and the Countryside Council for Wales are involved in similar discussions with the Environment Agency.

10.4 Committee commended the paper. The June 2002 Committee meeting will discuss in more detail issues arising from the Directive.

11. Update on New Habitat Lead Co-ordination Networks and Lead Agency Arrangements (JNCC 02 N01)

11.1 This paper presents an update on the revised arrangements for habitat Lead Co-ordination Networks and Lead Agencies, which were approved by Committee in December 2000. It advises that the new arrangements have been implemented and are discharging effectively JNCC's special functions in relation to habitat conservation.

11.2 Committee noted the paper.

12. Report on the effects of the Foot and Mouth Epidemic upon JNCC Programmes (JNCC 02 N03)

12.1 This paper summarises the effects of the 2001 epidemic of Foot and Mouth Disease on the JNCC's work programmes for 2001/2002.

12.2 In discussion, the following points were raised:

- i. The paper presents a good summary of the effects that Foot and Mouth Disease had on the work of the Support Unit but does not cover the direct effect the epidemic had on the environment.
- ii. English Nature has produced an interim report on the biological effect of the epidemic. Scottish Natural Heritage advised that results from a monitoring project in Galloway and the Borders indicate that it is the lowlands that have been mainly affected.

12.3 Committee noted the paper.

13. Developing a JNCC Environmental Policy and Management Action System (JNCC 02 N03)

13.1 This paper presents the current position on environmental management within the Support Unit revealed by the environmental audit and sets out a work programme for the next six months. Recommendations will be presented to Committee in September 2002.

13.2 In discussion the following points were raised:

- i. The Support Unit will not seek formal accreditation yet under ISO 14001 as the resources required to maintain accredited status cannot be committed. However, the Support Unit is keen to achieve effective solutions to improving the environmental impact of the organisation.

13.3 Committee noted the paper and approved the proposed strategy subject to the point raised.

14. Update on Staff Retention and Turnover *In confidence* (JNCC 02 N04)

14.1 The minute of this item is contained in a confidential addendum to the minutes.

15. Any Other Business

15.1 *Lichenology in Scotland*

Mr Scott advised that he would put together a short note with Dr Galbraith for the next Committee meeting following discussion by the SNH Scientific Advisory Committee on the state of lichenology in Scotland.

15.2 *Use of Committee time*

The possibility of initiating workshops or seminars involving the Committee members after Peterborough Committee meetings was suggested in order to make efficient use of Members' involvement in JNCC work. The opportunity for Committee members to engage with Support Unit staff was welcomed and Committee agreed to consider adopting this practice for the September meeting.

15.3 *June 2002 Committee meeting*

Chairman reminded Committee that the June meeting and field visit would be his last before he stepped down from his post. As the visit is to take place close to the Chairman's house, he advised that he would like to invite Committee to his home for lunch on the last day of the meeting. Committee thanked Chairman for the kind invitation.