

JOINT NATURE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

CONFIRMED MINUTES OF THE SEVENTY-SIXTH MEETING OF THE JOINT NATURE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE, HELD ON THURSDAY 6 DECEMBER 2007 AT MONKSTONE HOUSE, CITY ROAD, PETERBOROUGH, PE1 1JY

Present:

Dr Blakiston Houston
Dr Bridgewater (Chairman)
Dr Brown
Mr Crawley
Professor Doyle
Professor Hill
Professor Ingram
Mr Lloyd Jones
Mr Pritchard
Mr Riddleston
Professor Usher
Professor Warren

In attendance:

Professor Galbraith
Dr Phillips
Mrs Quince
Mr Seymour
Mr Steer
Dr Tew
Mr Thomas
Mr Yeo
Ms Johnston (item 6)
Mr Jones (items 7 & 10)
Dr McLean (items 8 & 9)
Dr Reid (item 13)
Ms Baker (item 15)
Dr Davies (item 16)

Contents:

1. Chairman's opening remarks
2. Declaration of interests
3. Amendments to the minutes of the seventy fifth meeting (**JNCC 07 P16**)
4. Matters arising

CLOSED SESSION

Decision papers – In confidence

5. JNCC corporate plan 2008-11 (**JNCC 07 D16/D16A**)
6. Progress in identification of offshore Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) (**JNCC 07 P18**)

Discussion papers – In confidence

7. EU Environmental Liability Directive (**JNCC 07 D14**)
8. Fifth Quinquennial Review of Schedules 5 and 8 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (**JNCC 07 D12**)
9. Wildlife law enforcement in the UK (**JNCC 07 D11**)
10. EC Habitats Directive – implications of establishing conservation status (**JNCC 07 D15**)
11. Severn Barrage (**JNCC 07 D18**)

12. Bovine TB (**Oral update**)
13. Identifying Special Protection Areas with marine components – update on progress (**JNCC 07 D19**)

OPEN SESSION

Decision paper

14. Review of Inter-Agency Climate Change Forum (**JNCC 07 P17**)

Discussion papers

15. Determining which chemicals may have significant impacts on biodiversity: an outline framework (**JNCC 07 D13**)
16. Update on European and UK marine policy initiatives (**JNCC 07 D10**)
17. Preparations for the ninth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (**JNCC 07 D17**)

Information paper

18. OSPAR Convention – a briefing on current progress in marine ecosystem protection (**JNCC 07 N10**)
19. Any other business

1. Chairman's opening remarks

- 1.1 Apologies had been received from Mr Christensen, Mr Thin, Dr Jardine and Dr Vincent.
- 1.2 Chairman informed the Committee that this would be the last meeting for Dr Blakiston Houston and Mr Riddleston. He thanked them for their work on behalf of the Committee and wished them well for the future.
- 1.3 Chairman informed the Committee that following consultation with members regarding the presentation of papers, changes would be made over the coming months.

2. Declaration of interests

- 2.1 Nothing was declared.

3. Amendments to the minutes of the seventy fifth meeting (JNCC 07 P16)

- 3.1 The minutes of the open session were agreed.

- 3.2 The minutes of the confidential session were agreed, subject to the amendments contained in JNCC 07 P16 and an amendment to 12.2 (v) raised at the meeting. This amendment is contained in the confidential addendum to the minutes.

4. Matters arising (JNCC 07 P19)

- 4.1 In addition to the matters set out in paper JNCC 07 P19, the following matters were raised.
- 4.3 Chairman had also met Michael Russell, the Scottish Minister for Environment, who was enthusiastic about the environment. Meetings with ministers in the Welsh and Northern Ireland administrations were planned for the new year. At the request of the CNCC, it was agreed that they would be involved in the meeting with the Northern Ireland minister.
- 4.4 Chairman had felt positive after the meetings with ministers and emphasised the importance of the Committee collectively building good political will and strong relationships with all administrations to affirm the importance of the JNCC and to show how the work of the JNCC cuts across many portfolios.
- 4.5 At the June meeting, Committee delegated to the Chairman responsibility for inviting a Committee member to join the review group looking at the future working of inter-agency groups. Chairman announced that Professor Hill would undertake this role.
- 4.6 At the September meeting, it had been agreed that a paper would be presented to the December meeting on a consultation process for the UK Nature Conservation Framework. Chairman informed members that following discussion with the country agencies more time was required to decide how best to handle future work on this issue. A paper will be presented at the March meeting. At Defra's request, a copy of the 'UK approach to Conserving Biodiversity' was made available to members.

CLOSED SESSION

The minutes for items 5-13 are contained in a confidential addendum.

OPEN SESSION

14. Review of Inter-Agency Climate Change Forum (JNCC 07 P17)

- 14.1 The paper was introduced by Professor Usher, who explained that it provides an overview of the Inter-Agency Climate Change Forum (IACCF), which was

established in September 2006 by the Committee. Professor Usher thanked Mr Riddleston for his efforts in initiating the Forum.

14.2 In discussion the following points were raised:

- i. the commitment shown by Ms Dickinson (JNCC Climate Change Adviser) to progress the work of the IACCF was commendable;
- ii. the IACCF had the potential to demonstrate a strong leadership role on climate change and biodiversity issues;
- iii. it was important that specialists in the country agencies maintained or even enhanced their support for the IACCF;
- iv. the IACCF should focus on delivering a small number of outcomes; and
- v. other partners should be sought to help advance the work programme.

14.3 The Committee approved the continuation of the IACCF and the revised terms of reference. It was agreed that the Committee should receive an annual report from the Forum, with brief updates on progress at each meeting.

15. Determining which chemicals may have significant impacts on biodiversity: an outline framework (JNCC 07 D13)

15.1 The paper was introduced by Ms Baker who explained that the paper proposes a framework approach as a means of determining the risk to biodiversity of chemicals once approved for use by the relevant regulatory mechanisms.

15.2 In discussion the following points were raised:

- i. the framework should consider the effects of pesticides on the full range of biodiversity, so far as this was practicable;
- ii. engaging with bodies such as the Advisory Committee on Pesticides, the Health & Safety Executive and the Royal Society of Chemistry would help progress the work;
- iii. it would be helpful to include examples of both high risk and low risk chemicals;
- iv. it would be useful to compare the effects of different chemicals used for similar purposes;
- v. the framework at present is nationally focussed - an assessment of regional variances would help inform national priorities; and

- vi. engaging with and influencing chemical manufacturers was important in improving practices.

15.3 The Committee supported the further development of the framework approach, and noted the need to identify the resource requirements.

16. Update on European and UK marine policy initiatives (JNCC 07 D10)

16.1 The paper was introduced by Jon Davies, who explained that it provides an update on three marine policy initiatives (the EU Marine Thematic Strategy and associated Directive, the EU Maritime Policy and the UK Marine Bill) together with some initial ideas on how JNCC might provide UK-level co-ordination for influencing future policy development and implementation.

16.2 In discussion the following points were raised:

- i. it was important for the country agencies and JNCC to work together on these issues, and for marine inter-agency groups to engage with groups dealing with other issues, such as climate change;
- ii. maritime policy development provided opportunities to benefit the environment; and
- iii. there were opportunities for JNCC to show leadership on issues such as ecosystem health.

16.3 The Committee agreed to receive an update report for the March meeting. Chairman would be meeting Jonathan Shaw shortly and would share feedback from the meeting with members.

17. Preparations for the ninth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (JNCC 07 D17)

17.1 The paper was introduced by Marcus Yeo, who explained that it provides information to members on the preparations for the ninth Conference of the Parties (CoP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the main topics of relevance to the JNCC.

17.2 In discussion the following points were raised:

- i. receiving papers on international issues was a useful source of information and helped engagement across the country agencies;
- ii. co-operation between multilateral environmental agreements should be encouraged and should not be restricted to the three Rio conventions;

- iii. further development of the ecosystem approach was critical and should include adaptation to climate change;
- iv. other important issues included environmental limits and environmental economics;
- v. it would be helpful to clarify what other countries were doing in relation to the 2010 target;
- vi. the operational implications of CBD decisions should be explored with the country agencies; and
- vii. JNCC and the agencies should consider holding a side event at the CoP.

17.3 The Committee agreed that JNCC staff should try to address the points noted in 17.2 during preparations for CBD CoP9

18. OSPAR Convention – a briefing on current progress in marine ecosystem protection (JNCC 07 N10)

18.1 The Committee noted the paper.

19. Any other business

- 19.1 The June 2008 Committee meeting will take place in Scotland. Discussions between SNH and the JNCC will take place shortly to agree a location and timetable.