



**PRIORITIES FOR JNCC'S WORK IN THE OVERSEAS TERRITORIES AND
CROWN DEPENDENCIES**

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JOINT NATURE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

PRIORITIES FOR JNCC'S WORK IN THE OVERSEAS TERRITORIES AND CROWN DEPENDENCIES

Paper by Tony Weighell and Tara Pelembe

1. UK policy framework for the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies

- 1.1 The UK's links with the Overseas Territories are outlined in the 1999 White Paper *Partnership for Progress and Prosperity: Britain and the Overseas Territories*. Chapter 8 of the White Paper focuses on sustainable development which led, in 2001, to the signing of Environment Charters by the UK Government and most of the Overseas Territories outlining the roles and responsibilities of each. To further clarify the UK Government support to Overseas Territories, the Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on Biodiversity adopted this year a new 'UK Government strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the United Kingdom's Overseas Territories' (Annex A). The overarching objective of this strategy is 'to enable the UK and Overseas Territory Governments to meet their international obligations for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Overseas Territories'.
- 1.2 FCO, DFID and Defra each have distinct responsibilities in relation to the Overseas Territories, as set out in Annex 5 of the UK Government strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Overseas Territories. The main responsibility for biodiversity conservation and wider environmental management in the Overseas Territories has been devolved to the Territory governments.
- 1.3 The UK Government is constitutionally responsible for the international representation of the Crown Dependencies¹, with the Ministry of Justice the UK Department with policy responsibility. The Crown Dependencies are self-governing with their own directly-elected legislatures and independent legal, administrative and fiscal systems. UK legislation only extends to them with the consent of the relevant legislatures.

2. UK Government strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Overseas Territories

- 2.1 The new UK Government strategy commits Defra, FCO and DFID, with support from JNCC, to work in partnership to enable the UK and Overseas Territory Governments to meet their international biodiversity obligations.

¹ Isle of Man, Jersey and Guernsey

- 2.2 Defra now chairs a cross-departmental official-level group² with responsibility for overseeing delivery of the UK Government's objectives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Overseas Territories. JNCC provides the secretariat for this group. The first meeting of the group took place on 29 September 2009.
- 2.3 Strategic priorities for the UK government's support for biodiversity conservation in the Overseas Territories include: undertaking baseline survey, combating invasive alien species, promoting climate change adaptation, highlighting the need for ecosystem valuation, and taking action to promote marine conservation.
- 2.4 Action by the UK Government to deliver these priorities will be focused on two areas:
- i. providing financial support to address the biodiversity priorities, including facilitating access to other sources of funding and helping to build capacity within the Territories;
 - ii. improving the flow of information and advice with and between the Overseas Territories, and supporting engagement with regional and international initiatives.
- 2.5 The UK Government strategy does not mention the Crown Dependencies but the first meeting of the cross-departmental group made it clear that the work undertaken under the umbrella of the strategy, and the strategic approach described above, can be extended to the Crown Dependencies. JNCC will work with the Dependencies to establish their biodiversity priorities.

3. JNCC's Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies programme

- 3.1 The overall objective of the programme is to provide advice and support to UK Government departments, the governments of the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies and others in respect of the implementation of Environment Charters, Multilateral Environmental Agreements and the UK government strategy on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Overseas Territories.
- 3.2 Key achievements for JNCC's work to date include:
- i. a costed assessment of nature conservation priorities in the Overseas Territories in response to a request from the Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on Biodiversity;
 - ii. a co-ordinated review of conservation research priorities in the Overseas Territories;

² Core members of the group are Defra, DFID, FCO, JNCC and the UK Overseas Territories Association (UKOTA)

- iii. establishment of a research and training programme to address research priorities identified by the Overseas Territories, and presented to Defra's Global Environmental Change Committee, through its Global Biodiversity Sub-Committee (GBSC);
- iv. taking a lead role in drafting the UK government strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the UK Overseas Territories;
- v. preparation of outreach materials in respect of climate change impacts in the Overseas Territories;
- vi. a review of the potential impact of invasive alien species through hosting seminars and developing a database;
- vii. preparation of an economic valuation toolkit and co-ordination of an economic valuation training workshop in the Caribbean;
- viii. securing additional Defra funding of £150,000 in 2008 and £250,000 in 2009 to spend in priority areas, including invasive alien control/eradication and climate change adaptation;
- ix. securing DFID funding of *ca* £35,000 to support a training programme for the Overseas Territories to help them to access funding for nature conservation priority actions.

4. Future priorities and delivery mechanisms

Capacity building and funding support

- 4.1 The UK Government strategy emphasises the need to build and strengthen capacity within the Overseas Territories. A significant element of JNCC's work is to assist in this capacity building.
- 4.2 The UK Government strategy highlights the need to support the Overseas Territories in accessing a range of funding sources, including Darwin Initiative, Overseas Territories Environment Programme and EU funding. JNCC has already initiated a training programme to assist Overseas Territories personnel in applying for such funding. This work is funded by DFID. In 2010, JNCC proposes to complete the training programme by organising and delivering training seminars to all remaining inhabited Territories that have requested but not yet received training. This will include a cross-Territory training programme in the Caribbean using the Cayman Islands as a local facility.
- 4.3 A number of focal points ('hubs') are being established through which priority work can be delivered to support Overseas Territory engagement with regional initiatives. JNCC has an initial agreement with the Cayman Islands Department of the Environment to act as a regional hub to encourage skill

share and training to address conservation and research priorities. This initial agreement provides for use of office space and local support. Further discussions will take place in early 2010 to extend the relationship. Focal points in other regions are being considered.

- 4.4 Sharing information across the Overseas Territories, Crown Dependencies, UK Government, NGOs and academic institutes has been identified as a priority through consultation with stakeholders and is an important component of the UK Government's strategy. One priority for government is to promote better understanding within the Territories of the role and value of the biodiversity-relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species and the Convention on Biological Diversity. This will be undertaken by JNCC during 2010, working through regional focal points as appropriate.

Research – terrestrial and marine

- 4.5 A paper to Defra's Global Environmental Change Committee, through its Global Biodiversity Sub-Committee (GBSC), and based on consultation with the Overseas Territories, has identified invasive alien species, habitat transformation and over-exploitation as the main drivers of biodiversity loss in the Territories. Baseline survey and eradication/control of invasive alien species were identified as key actions. An Overseas Territory research and training steering group, which includes JNCC, the University of Reading and representatives of the Territories, has been established to direct work. The Crown Dependencies will be invited to join this group.
- 4.6 The marine environment within the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies is less well understood than the terrestrial environment. Consultations have identified marine research and direct marine conservation action (for example through control of invasive aliens) as priorities. A cross-matching exercise has identified construction of biological inventories (baseline survey), preparation of action and management plans, and advice on impact assessments as the JNCC marine expertise areas of most relevance to Overseas Territory and Crown Dependency needs.
- 4.7 During 2010, through input into selected marine projects (funded by JNCC or external sources) and further consultation, JNCC will develop a strategy for providing marine input into the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies programme. Future marine input to the JNCC programme will involve either JNCC's own resources or drawing on other UK expertise. Marine research and action in the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies may be directed through UK (research), Caribbean (regional) and other focal points. During 2010 we will review the resources needed to undertake this work.

Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP)

- 4.8 JNCC will continue in its role of providing advice and support to the UK and Overseas Territory Governments in meeting commitments under the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP). JNCC

provides a strategic planning role, in particular to represent Overseas Territories on ACAP issues and meeting ACAP objectives and working with UK officials to develop an influencing strategy to protect albatrosses and petrels throughout the South Atlantic region.

Annex A

UK GOVERNMENT STRATEGY FOR THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF BIODIVERSITY IN THE UK OVERSEAS TERRITORIES

1. Background

1.1 This paper sets out a new UK Government strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Overseas Territories. It has been prepared by JNCC staff, with input from officials from Defra, FCO and DFID, at the request of the Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on Biodiversity (IDMGB). The IDMGB has endorsed the strategy.

2. The need for a UK Government strategy

2.1 The UK has international obligations to protect biodiversity. Under the Convention on Biological Diversity the UK has made a commitment to reduce significantly the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010 (and likely successor targets), and this target is a component of the Millennium Development Goal of ensuring environmental sustainability. There are additional commitments to protect biodiversity under other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (e.g. the Convention on Migratory Species, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species and the Ramsar Convention), all of which contribute to the wider 2010 target. For some of these agreements, the UK's interests are predominantly or exclusively related to the Overseas Territories (e.g. the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels). A list of Overseas Territories and the agreements to which they are signatories is provided at Annex 1.

2.2 Biodiversity in the UK Overseas Territories is globally significant. The Territories support unique ecosystems and a large number of rare and threatened species, many of which are found nowhere else in the world. Further details are provided in Annex 2.

2.4 Biodiversity in the Overseas Territories underpins many of the ecosystem goods and services which provide economic and social benefits to local populations. For example, the economies in Tristan da Cunha and the Falkland Islands are largely dependent on fisheries; in Montserrat, the Centre Hills supply the majority of the island's fresh water; and in several Territories, tourism is dependent on the natural environment. Biodiversity therefore plays a critical role in helping to achieve sustainable development.

2.5 The main threats to biodiversity in the Overseas Territories are invasive non-native species, climate change and habitat loss (e.g. through development for tourism).

2.6 As set out in the 1999 White Paper *Partnership for Progress and Prosperity: Britain and the Overseas Territories*, primary responsibility for biodiversity conservation and wider environmental management in the Overseas Territories has been devolved to the Territory governments, who, with the support of the UK Government, are responsible for developing appropriate, applicable and affordable environmental policies, legislation and standards.

2.7 However, the ability of many of the Territories to fully meet international obligations for biodiversity conservation is restricted by various factors, which may include some or all of the following:

- i. small and sometimes fragile economies;
 - ii. small human populations and consequently limited capacity to undertake environmental projects;
 - iii. limited access to technical expertise;
 - iv. remoteness, which adds to the costs of environmental projects.
- 2.8 The UK Government therefore supports Territory governments in meeting international obligations. Most of the Overseas Territories have Environment Charters, signed by both UK and Territory governments in 2001, which contain guiding principles and commitments. The UK Government's commitments are set out in Annex 3.
- 2.9 Additional support from the UK Government is needed to help reduce the rate of biodiversity loss in the Overseas Territories, which will contribute to meeting obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity and other Multilateral Environmental Agreements. Reducing the rate of biodiversity loss will also, directly and indirectly, provide support for livelihoods, and economic and social development in the Territories.
- 2.10 Several recent reports from parliamentary select committees, the National Audit Office and non-governmental organisations have stressed the importance of the UK Government's role in conserving biodiversity in the Overseas Territories (see Annex 4). These reports have recommended that if the UK Government is to discharge its responsibilities effectively a more joined-up approach across Whitehall is needed, in which all relevant departments play distinct but complementary roles. The reports also stress the requirement for enhanced financial support for biodiversity conservation in the Territories.
- 2.11 The UK Government has begun to address the points raised in these reports (e.g. through increased Defra funding to support biodiversity conservation in the Overseas Territories) but further progress is needed in response to the recommendations above.
- 2.12 **The UK Government will adopt a new strategy for conserving biodiversity in the Overseas Territories. The overarching objective of this strategy is:**
- to enable the UK and Overseas Territory Governments to meet their international obligations for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Overseas Territories.*

3. Government roles and responsibilities

- 3.1 Effective conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Overseas Territories will only be achieved through a partnership approach involving government, NGOs, scientific institutes, the private sector and others. It will require collaboration between bodies based in the Territories themselves and those based in the UK and elsewhere.
- 3.2 Within the UK Government, Defra, FCO and DFID each have responsibilities in relation to the Overseas Territories, as set out in Annex 5. Officials from each of these departments meet as a group to support the Inter-Departmental Ministerial

Group on Biodiversity, but the remit of this group is too wide to achieve an effective focus on Overseas Territories.

- 3.3 In line with the responsibilities set out in Annex 5, Defra, FCO and DFID, with support from JNCC, will work in partnership to enable the UK and Overseas Territory Governments to meet their international obligations for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Overseas Territories.
- 3.4 Collectively, the three departments will:
- i. ensure that UK Government strategies and policies for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Overseas Territories are sufficient to meet the UK's international commitments, taking account of Territories' individual legislative systems, capacity and other factors;
 - ii. provide effective, co-ordinated UK Government support for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Territories;
 - iii. help Territory governments to understand and meet international commitments and support their engagement in relevant international processes;
 - iv. champion, within Whitehall and more widely, the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Territories;

Defra will take the lead in co-ordinating the work of this partnership. All three departments will contribute funding.

- 3.5 JNCC will provide specialist support and expertise on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity to the UK Government and the Territories.
- 3.6 Defra will chair a cross-departmental official-level group with responsibility for overseeing delivery of the UK Government's objectives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Overseas Territories:
- i. core membership of this group will comprise Defra, FCO, DFID and JNCC. Other departments and statutory bodies with an interest in biodiversity conservation in the Overseas Territories, e.g. DCMS (World Heritage sites), MoD (management of the Defence Estate) and Royal Botanic Gardens Kew (advice on plant conservation), will be invited to participate as appropriate;
 - ii. JNCC will provide the secretariat for the group;
 - iii. to secure the engagement of Overseas Territory governments, a representative of the UK Overseas Territories Association³ will sit on the group;
 - iv. where necessary, issues requiring ministerial involvement will be directed to the Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on Biodiversity.

4. Strategic priorities for UK Government action

³ UKOTA comprises UK-based representatives of Overseas Territory governments

- 4.1 UK Government support for biodiversity conservation in the Overseas Territories should be focused on addressing those factors that are preventing achievement of commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity and other relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements (see 2.7 above).
- 4.2 Strategic priorities for the UK Government's support for biodiversity conservation in the Overseas Territories will comprise the following⁴:
- i. obtaining data on the location and status of biodiversity interests and the human activities affecting biodiversity to inform the preparation of policies and management plans (including baseline survey and subsequent monitoring);
 - ii. preventing the establishment of invasive alien species, and eradicating or controlling species that have already become established;
 - iii. developing cross-sectoral approaches to climate change adaptation that are consistent with the principles of sustainable development;
 - iv. developing tools to value ecosystem services to inform sustainable development policies and practices;
 - v. developing ecosystem-based initiatives for the conservation and sustainable use of the marine environment.
- 4.3 To address these priorities, action by the UK Government will be focused on:
- i. providing financial support (within the resource limits of each department) to address the priorities in 4.2, facilitating access to other sources of funding, and helping to build capacity within the Territories;
 - ii. improving the flow of information and advice with and between the Overseas Territories, and supporting engagement with regional and international initiatives.

5. Financial support for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Overseas Territories

- 5.1 The UK Government's approach is to encourage the Overseas Territories to focus on their responsibilities for biodiversity and to provide financial assistance to those Territories that need it. Territories vary in their financial and technical resources and thus the level of support required from the UK will vary.
- 5.2 Current UK Government funding for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Overseas Territories is summarised in Annex 5. The amount of funding provided by the UK Government has increased in recent years, primarily because of additional support from Defra, and exceeded £1.5 million in 2008/09.
- 5.3 At present, Overseas Territories are ineligible for many international funds, including the Global Environment Facility (GEF) – the key funding mechanism for the Convention on Biological Diversity. Many of the European Funds available to

⁴ These priorities have been identified following consultation with Overseas Territory governments, UK Government and selected NGOs.

metropolitan UK (e.g. rural development funds) are not available to the Overseas Territories.

- 5.4 While current funding arrangements have led to some notable successes, they are insufficient to fully meet the UK's international commitments for biodiversity conservation, and are not necessarily focused on the strategic priorities identified in 4.2. In 2007, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds conducted an exercise to cost biodiversity priorities in the Overseas Territories, and estimated that funding of £16 million pa was required. Following consultation with Overseas Territory governments in 2008, JNCC advised that the total cost of meeting high priority biodiversity conservation projects was in excess of £48 million over a 5-year period.
- 5.5 While the UK Government has a responsibility for ensuring that international obligations in relation to biodiversity conservation are met, and should make a contribution towards meeting the funding shortfall described above, it cannot be expected to meet the full costs, and so other funding sources will need to be accessed.
- 5.6 Increasing the budgets available for biodiversity conservation in the Overseas Territories will not immediately solve all the problems. Many Territory governments do not currently have the institutional capacity to spend increased funding effectively or to prepare high-quality bids for funding.
- 5.7 There is no 'one size fits all' solution. Funding requirements range from small projects with a cost of a few thousand pounds to major programmes of work with a cost of several million pounds because of the scale of the work required and the remoteness of some of the locations (e.g. eradication of non-native species from islands). Some work is best targeted on a small geographical area, other work is best undertaken at a regional scale.
- 5.8 Supported by funding from DFID, JNCC is currently undertaking an exercise to collate information on potential funding sources for biodiversity conservation in the Overseas Territories and make this available through a web-based search tool. This work will be completed later in 2009. To date, several hundred potential funding sources have been identified, including Government streams, international funds, multilateral institutions, EU regional frameworks, non-governmental organisations, private trusts and foundations.
- 5.9 Future UK Government funding arrangements for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Overseas Territories will:
 - i. be sufficiently flexible to reflect the different social, economic and environmental characteristics of each Territory;
 - ii. be focused on the strategic priorities listed in 4.2;
 - iii. encourage regional or cross-Territory initiatives, e.g. where these offer an effective means of addressing the impacts of climate change and invasive species;
 - iv. support long-term capacity-building (e.g. through funding of training, secondments and cross-Territory skill exchange), as well as on-the-ground conservation work;

- v. not be a substitute for reasonable recurrent expenditure from Territory governments.

5.10 The UK Government will:

- i. provide project funds for biodiversity conservation and wider environmental management, within the resource limits of each department, aiming to increase the amount of money available to at least £2 million pa. This will be achieved by:
 - a) maintaining OTEP (which funds some biodiversity projects and some wider environmental projects) with a budget of at least £1 million pa;
 - b) ear-marking up to £1.5 million for biodiversity projects in the Overseas Territories in the forthcoming Round of the Darwin Initiative, including the creation of a new Overseas Territories Challenge Fund within the Darwin Initiative to prepare for main projects.
- ii. in the longer term, consider establishing a new UK Government funding stream that would support a wide range of environmental activities (including biodiversity projects) within the Overseas Territories, and would subsume OTEP and the Overseas Territory elements of the Darwin Initiative;
- iii. in addition, explore possibilities for helping the Overseas Territories access the large international funds on biodiversity, climate change and natural heritage. This would require significant political expenditure, but could potentially secure significant additional funds for work in the Overseas Territories;
- iv. continue to help Overseas Territories to participate in the full range of available funding sources, especially those that have the potential to support major biodiversity projects (such as EU funds and certain charitable trusts) by maintaining an up-to-date database of funding mechanisms, providing guidance/training, and supporting the preparation of funding applications by bodies in the Overseas Territories.

6. Improving communication and engagement

- 6.1 There are substantial benefits to be gained from improving the flow of information between Territories, and enabling Territories to access information and expertise within the UK and elsewhere.
- 6.2 The participation of Overseas Territories in regional initiatives will often provide access to a wider pool of expertise, achieve greater nature conservation benefits, and enhance cost-effectiveness. Several initiatives of this nature are currently underway, e.g. in relation to climate change in the Caribbean, and invasive alien species in the south Atlantic. Active engagement of the Territories in global mechanisms, such as the Global Island Partnership (GLISPA), is also beneficial.
- 6.3 Some European initiatives are intended to support biodiversity conservation in the EU's Overseas Territories and Outermost Regions. Notably, the European Commission has recently proposed the BEST scheme to promote the conservation

and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services in European overseas entities.

- 6.4 The UK Government will build on its current efforts by:
- i. promoting the sharing of information and experience between the Overseas Territories and with other relevant bodies, and facilitating access to expertise that is not available in the Territories themselves, e.g. through building links with academic institutions and nature conservation agencies in the UK and elsewhere;
 - ii. encouraging Overseas Territory governments to develop and participate in cross-territory and regional initiatives;
 - iii. enabling Overseas Territory governments to input effectively to Multilateral Environmental Agreements and other global initiatives by establishing a network of contact points, providing early warning of key issues, and giving timely feedback. In particular, Overseas Territories will be consulted on the development of UK/EU positions and efforts will be made to minimise reporting requirements;
 - iv. helping the Overseas Territories to take full advantage of EU initiatives and funding opportunities, such as BEST, through liaison with the European Commission and other EU institutions.

ANNEX 1. OVERSEAS TERRITORY SIGNATORIES TO MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS RELATING TO THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF BIODIVERSITY

	Convention on Biological Diversity	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species	Ramsar Convention on Wetlands	Convention on Migratory Species (CMS)	CMS Indian Ocean – South-East Asian Marine Turtle MOU	CMS EUROBATS Agreement	CMS Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels
Anguilla			✓				
Bermuda		✓	✓	✓			
British Antarctic Territory							✓
British Indian Ocean Territory		✓	✓	✓	✓		
British Virgin Islands	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cayman Islands	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cyprus Sovereign Base Areas				✓			
Falkland Islands		✓	✓	✓			✓
Gibraltar	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Montserrat		✓	✓	✓			
Pitcairn		✓	✓	✓			
Saint Helena (including dependencies)	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands			✓	✓			✓
Turks and Caicos			✓	✓			

ANNEX 2. BIODIVERSITY IN THE UK OVERSEAS TERRITORIES

Because many of the UK Overseas Territories are small, isolated islands, they hold relatively large numbers of endemic species that are found nowhere else in the world. To date, over 340 endemic species have been recorded from the Overseas Territories, compared to about 60 in metropolitan UK.

The 2004 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species lists globally threatened species. Figures for the UK Overseas Territories include:

- 80 critically endangered species (compared to 10 in metropolitan UK);
- 73 endangered species (12 in metropolitan UK); and
- 158 vulnerable species (37 in the metropolitan UK).

It is likely that these figures are under-estimates, as new studies invariably report the occurrence of additional species or populations especially amongst the less well-known taxa, such as invertebrates.

As an indication of the threats to island biodiversity, there are 39 recorded extinctions in the UK Overseas Territories and two species are extinct in the wild, compared with only a single extinction from the metropolitan UK. The most recent extinction in the Overseas Territories was the St Helena olive *Nesiota elliptica*, which occurred in 2003 when the last tree in cultivation died (the last wild individual had died in 1994).

In addition to numbers of globally threatened species, the Overseas Territories also hold regionally or globally important concentrations or assemblages of species. For example:

- Ascension Island supports the second largest green turtle rookery in the Atlantic;
- Gough Island (Tristan da Cunha) has been described as, arguably, the most important seabird island in the world; and
- the reefs of the Chagos Archipelago (British Indian Ocean Territory) are described as some of the most pristine and best protected in the Indian Ocean (and account for some 1.3% of the world resource).

The importance to nature conservation of parts of the Territories is recognised through the designation as World Heritage Sites of Gough Island & Inaccessible Islands (Tristan) and Henderson Island (Pitcairn) for their insular natural heritage interests.

ANNEX 3. UK GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENTS UNDER THE ENVIRONMENT CHARTERS

1. Help build capacity to support and implement integrated environmental management which is consistent with the Overseas Territories' plans for sustainable development
2. Assist in reviewing and updating environmental legislation
3. Facilitate the extension of the UK's ratification of Multilateral Environmental Agreements of benefit to the Overseas Territories and which the Territories have the capacity to implement
4. Keep Overseas Territories informed regarding new developments in relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements and invite them, where appropriate, to participate in the UK's delegation to international environmental negotiations and conferences
5. Help to ensure that the Overseas Territories have the legislation, institutional capacity and mechanisms needed to meet international obligations
6. Use UK, regional and local expertise, to give advice and improve knowledge of technical and scientific issues
7. Promote better co-operation and the sharing of experience and expertise between Overseas Territories and with small island states and communities which face similar environmental problems
8. Use the Overseas Territories Environment Programme and promote access to other sources of public funding for projects of lasting benefit to the Overseas Territories' environment
9. Help Overseas Territories to identify further funding partners for environmental projects, such as donors, the private sector or non-governmental organisations
10. Recognise the diversity of the challenges facing Overseas Territories in very different socio-economic and geographical situations

ANNEX 4. EXTRACTS FROM RECENT REPORTS RELATING TO UK GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN CONSERVING BIODIVERSITY IN THE UK OVERSEAS TERRITORIES

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. *Advocacy 2009: Nature Needs a Voice.*
http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/Advocacy_tcm9-213973.pdf

Page 23. It is time for the UK Government to take seriously its responsibilities for biodiversity conservation on the UKOTs. A lead government department should be identified to take on this responsibility and allocate sufficient resources (at least £16 million per year) so that UKOTs can address their biodiversity priorities and the UK Government can demonstrate to the world that it takes its commitment seriously.

Environmental Audit Committee, November 2008. *Halting Biodiversity Loss.*
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmenvaud/743/743.pdf>

46. The Government has a clear moral and legal duty to help protect the biodiversity of the UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, where it is the eleventh hour for many species. We are extremely concerned that recommendations that we have made in the past that would have helped to protect the environment of the Overseas Territories have been ignored. The Government must:

- adopt a truly joined-up approach to environmental protection in the UKOTs and Crown Dependencies, by bringing together all relevant departments including the FCO, MoJ, DfID, Defra, DCMS and MoD, and the governments of the UKOTs and Crown Dependencies;
- make better use of the Inter-Departmental Group on biodiversity to provide more oversight and support for the development and implementation of effective environmental protection policy in the UKOTs, and expand the Group to include other relevant departments;
- have Defra assume joint responsibility for the UKOTs, and reflect this in future spending settlements; and
- address the dire lack of funds and information for environmental protection in the UKOTs. An ecosystem assessment should be conducted in partnership with each UKOT in order to provide the baseline environmental data required and to outline the effective response options needed to halt biodiversity loss.

47. With leadership, and a relatively small sum of money, the incredible biodiversity found in our overseas territories can be safeguarded into the future. One of the most important contributions that the Government could make to slowing the catastrophic global biodiversity loss currently occurring would be to accept its responsibilities and to provide more support for the UK Overseas Territories in this area.

Foreign Affairs Committee, July 2008. *Overseas Territories.*
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmselect/cmffaff/147/147i.pdf>

295. We agree with the Environmental Audit Committee that the Government does not appear to have carried out any kind of strategic assessment of Overseas Territories' funding requirements for conservation and ecosystem management. We conclude that given the vulnerability of Overseas Territories' species and ecosystems, this lack of action by the Government is highly negligent. The environmental funding currently being provided by the UK to the Overseas Territories appears grossly inadequate and we recommend that it should be increased. While DEFRA is the lead Whitehall department responsible for environmental issues, the FCO cannot abdicate responsibility for setting levels of funding given its knowledge of Overseas Territories' capacity and resources. The FCO must work with other government departments to press for a proper assessment of current needs and the

level of the current funding gap and then ensure increased funding by the Government through DEFRA, DFID or other government departments is targeted appropriately.

National Audit Office, November 2007. *Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Managing risk in the Overseas Territories.*

http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/0708/managing_risk_in_the_overseas.aspx

Recommendation 1: Only a minority of UK Departments have significant involvement in the Overseas Territories, despite these being a UK-wide responsibility. Other UK government departments should be required to set out their arrangements for dealing with Overseas Territory issues and to nominate a clear contact point to ensure that these responsibilities are being addressed.

- All Departments need to ensure that they consult with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Territories at the earliest possible stage of extending legislation to the Territories.
- All Departments need to ensure that, where relevant, their legislation and programmes are developed and delivered with the practicalities of their application in the Territories in mind.
- Departments should be responsive in providing specialist advice and other input into FCO and DFID development projects in Territories, where necessary.

Environmental Audit Committee, January 2007. *The UN Millennium Ecosystem Assessment.*

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmselect/cmenvaud/77/77.pdf>

133. Considering the UKOTs lack of capacity, both financial and human, we find it distasteful that FCO and DFID stated that if UKOTs are “sufficiently committed” they should support environmental positions “from their own resources”. The continued threat of the extinction of around 240 species in the UKOTs is shameful. If the Government is to achieve the World Summit on Sustainable Development 2010 target to significantly reduce the rate of biodiversity loss within its entire territory, the Government must act decisively to prevent further loss of biodiversity in the UKOTs.

140. We welcome the DEFRA Minister’s recognition of the problems facing the UKOTs, and their lack of capacity to deal with the environmental challenges that they face. Given this and our international, not to mention moral, obligation to prevent biodiversity loss in the UKOTs, the Government must now move towards increased and more appropriate funding for conservation and ecosystem management there. The amount of resources required to undertake this work is miniscule in comparison to the environmental and social gains that would be expected. Such funding must be more long-term and strategic to enable the environmental capacity in the UKOTs to reach the levels required. DEFRA must be given joint responsibility for delivery of this.

ANNEX 5. SUMMARY OF UK GOVERNMENT ROLES AND RESOURCING IN RELATION TO ENVIRONMENT/BIODIVERSITY THE OVERSEAS TERRITORIES

	FCO	DFID	Defra
Responsibility	Co-ordination of overall UK Government policy on Overseas Territories issues.	DFID provides budgetary aid and development assistance to Montserrat, St Helena and Pitcairn to help meet their essential needs. It also provides technical and financial support on cross-cutting issues like human rights, environment and HIV, to all Overseas Territories.	Responsible for nature conservation and biodiversity across UK Government, including multilateral environmental agreements to which the UK is signatory.
Staff	0.5 staff deal with environmental/biodiversity protection.	1.2 full-time equivalents.	No dedicated staff for Overseas Territory issues. Several staff deal on an ad hoc basis with Darwin, ACAP etc.
Programme funding	The Overseas Territories Environment Programme (OTEP) has an annual budget of £1 million and is jointly funded by DFID and FCO. It is a project-based fund that supports the implementation of Environment Charters and environmental management more generally in the UK Overseas Territories (i.e. its aims are wider than just biodiversity conservation). DFID also provides funding for biodiversity and environmental management through its budgetary aid and development programmes to Montserrat, St Helena and Pitcairn. The proportion dedicated to environmental management varies between Territories and between programmes depending on nature and need.		The Darwin Initiative is funded by Defra, and assists countries that are rich in biodiversity but poor in financial resources to implement their obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on Trade in Endangered Species and the Convention on Migratory Species, through the funding of collaborative projects which draw on UK biodiversity expertise. Applications for Overseas Territory projects are particularly welcomed, and in the latest round of funding over £400k was assigned to projects in the Overseas Territories. Defra also provides financial support for biodiversity conservation in the Overseas Territories in various other ways, notably through core funding for JNCC and Kew, the Flagship Species Fund and support for Multilateral Environmental Agreements. In 2008/09 the total value of this funding was over £500k.