



REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT BOARD

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JOINT NATURE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT BOARD

Paper by Marcus Yeo

1. Since the last report to the Joint Committee, the Executive Management Board (EMB) has met twice: on 21 April and 12 May. Minutes of the meeting are available on request.
2. The main items discussed by EMB and other significant issues relating to the Committee's reserved matters which are not covered by other Committee papers are summarised below. A corresponding report has been made to the company board on relevant matters.
3. The establishment of the new coalition government will have important implications for JNCC's future priorities and funding. High-level environmental priorities are set out in the coalition agreement but it is not yet clear what this will mean for JNCC. The Chair is seeking an introductory meeting with the Defra minister responsible for JNCC (Richard Benyon).
4. On 24 May, the government announced £6.2 billion of spending cuts for 2010/11. Defra will contribute £162 million towards this total. A ministerial decision is expected very shortly on the in-year cuts that JNCC will be expected to bear, and will be reported at the Committee meeting. The package of spending cuts also includes a freeze on recruitment to the civil service and arms-length bodies, although it is anticipated that it will be possible to apply for exemptions.
5. On 10 May, the Chair and Managing Director attended the official opening of Inverdee House, the new office accommodation in Aberdeen that JNCC shares with SNH and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency. The new office is a marked improvement on the cramped accommodation that JNCC previously occupied, and staff are settling in well. Meanwhile, discussions with Defra regarding future Peterborough accommodation are proceeding.
6. The Chair and Managing Director met the Scottish Minister for Environment, Roseanna Cunningham in May. The Minister was positive about JNCC's support for Scottish Government, and confirmed that her current priorities for JNCC were provision of data/evidence and support for marine nature conservation.
7. Since the departure of Andy Stott, Paul Rose has been temporarily appointed as Director of Science. The appointment is initially for a period of three months.