



**JNCC BUSINESS PLAN FOR 2010/11**

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## **JOINT NATURE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE**

### **BUSINESS PLAN FOR 2010/11**

#### **Paper by Sue McQueen**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 At its December meeting, Joint Committee endorsed a draft of the corporate plan as a basis for consultation.
- 1.2 Since December funding levels have been confirmed and key stakeholders have been consulted. The Plan (attached at appendix 1) has been revised to reflect confirmed funding and to address stakeholder feedback. The plan has also been revised from a three-year to a one-year plan, at the request of Defra, because of uncertainties over future funding.
- 1.3 Subject to Committee endorsement of the revised plan it will be submitted to ministers for final approval.

#### **2 Funding**

- 2.1 The Plan is based on £9.97m grant-in aid and £918k income.
- 2.2 The grant-in aid comprises:
  - i. a 2.5% reduction in core funding (£194k);
  - ii. an additional £2.401m for Marine Protected Areas and Marine Surveillance and Monitoring programmes. Additionally JNCC will direct a further £830k for integrated survey and site verification held by Cefas and Defra. Overall this represents an increase of £1.750m on the £1.481m made available to JNCC as income for this work during 2009/10.

#### **3 Stakeholder consultation**

- 3.1 All key stakeholders have been consulted through correspondence and/or face to face meetings.

- 3.2 Feedback reflected strong support for the work set out in the plan and satisfaction with relationships between JNCC and its core stakeholders. Key performance indicators have been refined to make them 'smarter' and further information has been provided to more clearly show how the plan supports the priorities of Defra and the devolved administrations.
- 3.3 Substantive issues raised were as follows:
- i. Marine work should remain a top priority and planned timetables should be maintained. JNCC should maintain its flexible approach to accommodate the different policies and processes of the different administrations;
  - ii. JNCC's aspirations for increased collaboration across UK nature conservation bodies to increase efficiency were shared;
  - iii. Whilst the reviews of Special Protection Areas and guidance for the selection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest should remain in the plan, the trend is towards a broader ecosystems approach.
- 3.4 These issues will be addressed going forward.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **JNCC BUSINESS PLAN FOR 2010/11**

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This business plan sets out in detail JNCC's priorities and work programmes for 2010/11 based on agreed Government funding and anticipated external income.
- 1.2 Over the next few months, we will work closely with UK government and devolved administrations to develop plans for future years in line with available funding and to ensure that we continue to deliver Government's highest priorities.

#### **2. About JNCC and our work**

- 2.1 JNCC is the public body that advises the UK Government and devolved administrations on UK-wide and international nature conservation.
- 2.2 Our work contributes to maintaining and enriching biological diversity, conserving geological features and sustaining natural systems. These provide the core services upon which humans depend, including fresh water, clean air and food. In this way they contribute to economic growth and social well-being and are integral to sustainable development.
- 2.3 Wise decisions are informed decisions. Better policy making, improved planning, innovative development and effective risk management depend on having reliable and current information on the status and trends of biodiversity as well as full cost and benefit implications. JNCC's role is to provide evidence, information and advice to enable decisions to be taken that protect our natural resources and systems.

#### **3. Our strategy**

- 3.1 2009/10 was a challenging and productive year for the organisation. As well as delivering a wide-ranging programme of work we took stock of our strategic direction in light of nature conservation challenges, increasing devolution of nature conservation responsibilities within the UK, and the priorities of our main stakeholders. As a result we will focus our work on the following strategic objectives, which are distinctive from, and complementary to, the country conservation bodies and the many other organisations delivering nature conservation. We:
  - contribute to the development of the UK, EU and global evidence base and identify future challenges to UK biodiversity and geodiversity by gathering intelligence and assessing risk and opportunity;

- provide advice and long-term thinking on solutions to biodiversity and geodiversity challenges, and engage in, commission and deliver initiatives to address these challenges:
  - outside territorial waters;
  - in the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies;
  - globally;
- act as an informed link between national, European and global decision-making and implementation bodies, and provide advice on policy and implementation and communicate best practice to stakeholders working across and at these scales.

#### **4. Who we work with and for**

- 4.1 Because of the nature of our work, JNCC has extensive experience of partnership working and collaboration. JNCC itself is a forum bringing together, on our Committee, the UK's four country nature conservation bodies: Countryside Council for Wales, Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside, Natural England and Scottish Natural Heritage. Our staff work with these, and a large number of other organisations to join up nature conservation policy and implementation at different geographical scales and across different sectors, and to maximise returns from investments in research and surveillance to provide a strong, and cost-effective evidence base.
- 4.2 In 2010/11, we will be enhancing collaborative working arrangements in various ways:
- we will have in place a new six-year agreement with the British Trust for Ornithology that will deliver a wealth of evidence on the status of birds across the UK, utilising the BTO's vast network of highly-skilled volunteer recorders;
  - we will have a Memorandum of Understanding with the newly-established Marine Management Organisation, setting out how the two organisations will work together to achieve integrated management of the marine environment;
  - we will work in partnership with Cefas, to enable cost-effective use of government assets in support of marine survey and biodiversity monitoring;
  - we will continue to build partnerships with a range of statutory bodies to develop a strategic framework for marine biodiversity surveillance in UK waters that delivers all policy and statutory obligations cost-effectively.

#### **5. How we support government**

- 5.1 Our work supports the goals of our sponsor bodies.
- 5.2 Nature conservation within the UK is a devolved responsibility. The devolved administrations are supported in their work by the country nature conservation bodies (Countryside Council for Wales, Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside, Natural England and Scottish Natural Heritage). JNCC plays a complementary role. We help to make devolution work more effectively by acting as

an informed interface between domestic and EU/global bodies, and providing evidence and advice to support devolved decision-making.

- 5.3 At the UK Government level, we provide advice on international and marine nature conservation to Defra, and, in a more modest way, several other Whitehall departments.
- 5.4 Our business plan is developed in conjunction with the country conservation bodies and their respective administrations to ensure that we support their priority outcomes. The most important links between JNCC's work and Government priorities and targets are summarised below.

### ***England/UK***

- 5.5 JNCC provides a range of services to Defra, some of which support the department's UK-wide and international remit, while others contribute to the department's responsibilities for nature conservation in England. Much of JNCC's work is covered by PSA 28 (to secure a healthy natural environment for everyone's well being, health and prosperity, now and in the future), and associated departmental strategic objectives.
- 5.6 JNCC works in close collaboration with Natural England, and by providing technical advice and evidence and a link with European and global initiatives helps to underpin Natural England's role in leading implementation of the England Biodiversity Strategy.
- 5.7 JNCC provides direct support to Defra on 'reserved' functions, including work with an international dimension and nature conservation in offshore marine waters (beyond 12 nm). We also support the work of various other Whitehall departments, including the Department for Energy and Climate Change, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and the Department for International Development.
- 5.8 High-level relationships between the work of Defra, Natural England and JNCC are summarised in Annex 2.

### ***Scotland***

- 5.9 JNCC works closely with SNH to support Scottish Government's overarching purpose of sustainable economic growth, recognising that protection and enhancement of Scotland's natural heritage makes a crucial contribution to achieving this. Scottish Government has set five strategic objectives. JNCC's work primarily supports the 'Greener Scotland' objective: Improving Scotland's natural and built environment and the sustainable use and enjoyment of it. The strategic objectives are supported by 15 national outcomes, which set out Scottish Government's aims over a ten-year period.
- 5.10 During 2010/11, JNCC will continue to support the strategic priorities set out in SNH's corporate strategy for 2008-13. JNCC also aims to forge closer working relationships with Scottish Government, including Marine Scotland. Work in the marine environment will be an important theme, in line with the Marine (Scotland) Act and executive devolution to Scottish Government of nature conservation

responsibilities in Scottish offshore waters. In April 2010, around 30 JNCC marine staff will move to new office accommodation in Aberdeen, shared with SNH and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency. More widely, we will continue to provide evidence and technical advice to support devolved activities (such as implementation of the Scottish Biodiversity Strategy) and act as an intelligent two-way link between Scottish and European/global institutions.

- 5.11 High-level relationships between the work of Scottish Government, SNH and JNCC are summarised in Annex 3.

### ***Wales***

- 5.12 The Welsh Assembly Government's programme for its four-year term is set out in *One Wales: a progressive agenda for the Government of Wales*. Environmental priorities and actions are described in the Assembly Government's Environment Strategy. The Strategy Action Plan for 2008-11 contains 10 priority themes and 40 actions, with associated outcomes and indicators.

- 5.13 CCW has a lead role in delivering several of the themes in the Environment Strategy, and JNCC provides support to CCW through provision of evidence and advice with a UK, European and global perspective. Our input will support work across marine and terrestrial environments, within protected areas, and in the wider environment. Increasingly, we will focus on helping CCW and the Welsh Assembly Government to take an ecosystem-based approach to their work.

- 5.14 High-level relationships between the work of the Welsh Assembly Government, CCW and JNCC are summarised in Annex 4.

### ***Northern Ireland***

- 5.15 The context for environmental work in Northern Ireland is provided by the Executive's programme for Government for 2008-11. The Department of the Environment in Northern Ireland has five strategic objectives for 2008-11, each of which has associated targets that are reflected in the Department's Public Service Agreement (PSA). More specific actions and targets are contained in departmental and NIEA corporate and business plans.

- 5.16 JNCC has productive working relationships with NIEA and CNCC, and provides services across a wide front to support priorities such as implementation of the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy and designation of protected sites. We focus on providing a wider geographical context for nature conservation in Northern Ireland and access to specialist expertise.

- 5.17 In the coming months, we intend to have further discussions with the Department of the Environment, NIEA and CNCC to ensure that we maximise the value for money we provide and that our services take full account of Northern Ireland's institutional arrangements and environmental challenges.

- 5.18 High-level relationships between the work of the Department of the Environment and JNCC are summarised in Annex 5.

## **6. Priorities for 2010/11**

- 6.1 Demand for advice and other services from JNCC remains high, and exceeds what we are able to deliver with the resources available. We have therefore very carefully prioritised existing and potential new work and devised a programme that will meet our key stakeholders' principal requirements and make a substantial contribution to the protection of natural resources as an integral part of sustainable development. These priorities and the main changes from the current programme of work are set out below.

### ***International nature conservation***

- 6.2 International nature conservation will remain a core component of JNCC's work. UK Government is committed to making an appropriate contribution towards the global and EU targets to reduce significantly/halt the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010, delivered through multilateral environmental agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, and EU policy and legislation. In 2010/11, attention will shift to reviewing progress against the 2010 targets and developing post-2010 initiatives in response to new EU and global targets.
- 6.3 JNCC's role is to act as a link between international agreements and domestic implementation (which is largely devolved). We provide technical support to Government in its interactions with European and global decision-making bodies, and provide intelligence and analysis to the country conservation bodies and devolved administrations to underpin the development and implementation of devolved policy.
- 6.4 We take a thematic approach to our international work, promoting consistent messages on the main drivers of biodiversity loss, such as climate change and invasive alien species, across the many different policy and legislative mechanisms.
- 6.5 During 2010/11 there will be growing demand for advice on international issues so our plans reflect a modest increase to budgets provided for some aspects of international work. Our main outputs in 2010/11 will be:
- i. technical support to government in preparation for the 10<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Japan in October 2010, including input to The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) project and greater emphasis on marine issues;
  - ii. advice to UK and Overseas Territory governments on implementation of the new UK Government strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Overseas Territories;
  - iii. support for the advice provided by the country conservation bodies to their administrations, by providing high-quality intelligence and analysis on EU policy and legislation affecting the environment;
  - iv. evidence-based advice to inform the development and implementation of EU policy and legislation, including the Sustainable Development Strategy, the

Common Agriculture and Fisheries Policies, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, climate change and energy policies, and the 7<sup>th</sup> Environmental Action Programme.

***Marine nature conservation***

- 6.6 Defra and devolved administrations are devoting more resources to marine nature conservation to meet commitments under the OSPAR Convention, the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, the Habitats and Birds Directives, and new domestic marine legislation.
- 6.7 Using its extensive marine expertise, JNCC has a key role to play in helping governments to meet their marine objectives. Our efforts will be focused on offshore waters beyond 12 nm, and at a European level, but we will also work with the country conservation bodies and others to ensure that there is a sound evidence base to support decision-making across the marine environment as whole, and that international obligations can be met in a consistent manner.
- 6.8 The UK Marine and Coastal Access Act and Marine (Scotland) Bill, supplemented by executive devolution, will provide the Scottish Government with powers for nature conservation in Scottish offshore waters. JNCC's role as statutory adviser to Scottish Government on these responsibilities mean that we will need to continue to strengthen our relationship with Scottish Government as well as maintaining our relationships with Defra and the other devolved administrations. We will also need to establish a strong working relationship with the newly created Marine Management Organisation.
- 6.9 Our main outputs in 2010/11 will be:
- i. statutory advice to industry and regulators on licensed activities that affect the marine environment, including oil and gas activities, marine renewables and aggregate extraction;
  - ii. advice to Government on completing the identification of Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas beyond territorial waters, to meet the requirements of the Habitats and Birds Directives, and to contribute to obligations under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the OSPAR Convention;
  - iii. work in partnership with country conservation bodies, government administrations and other stakeholders to identify marine protected areas<sup>1</sup> to contribute to a UK network of sites to meet national and international commitments;
  - iv. provide advice on the management of offshore marine protected areas and contribute to the design of management measures;

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<sup>1</sup> Marine Conservation Zones in England and Wales, Marine Protected Areas in Scotland.

- v. support for the implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive in UK waters through technical advice on the determination of Good Environmental Status;
- vi. in conjunction with the country conservation bodies, provide proposals for the development of operational surveillance and monitoring programmes for marine habitats, birds, and cetaceans and operational monitoring of all marine protected sites to meet UK statutory and policy requirements in an integrated manner.

***Evidence and standards***

- 6.10 JNCC will continue to play a key role in providing evidence and policy-relevant information to support environmental decision-taking and policy development within the UK, and advising on the adequacy of the evidence base. An essential part of our work in this area is our support for long-term biodiversity monitoring programmes – this takes up a large proportion of JNCC’s UK co-ordination budget, but it underpins many country and UK applications.
- 6.11 We play a pivotal role in encouraging and enabling public bodies, industry and volunteers to share their biodiversity data to strengthen the policy evidence base. We also engage with international initiatives to ensure that UK data can be placed within a wider geographical context.
- 6.12 Within the UK, environmental policy is largely devolved but where matters relate to the UK as an EU Member State and other reserved matters, JNCC continues to play a role in establishing UK-wide conservation standards and providing advice. Reduced funding to this work has required JNCC to take difficult decisions to reduce, or bring to an end, some services that stakeholders value or not to initiate work to meet new demands. Notably, JNCC will bring publication of the Geological Conservation Review series to a conclusion during 2010 before all remaining volumes have been completed. However, we will seek to ensure that the information needed by others is made available in a more economic way, for example through electronic publication.
- 6.13 Our main outputs in 2010/11 will be:
  - i. UK-wide assessments on the status of and trends in birds, mammals, plants and invertebrates, as a contribution to a UK biodiversity surveillance strategy that delivers multiple requirements effectively and efficiently;
  - ii. continuing technical development and increased promotion of the tools that have been developed under the National Biodiversity Network to enhance use of biodiversity data in a range of applications, to maximise investment by the country conservation bodies in the voluntary data collation sector;
  - iii. advice to inform the development of a more effective and streamlined international science-policy interface through greater co-ordination and strengthening of existing mechanisms, and the creation of a new International Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services;

- iv. information products to meet specific policy applications within UK Government and the devolved administrations;
- v. further development of the Biodiversity Action Reporting System.
- vi. a transition to new arrangements for the operation of inter-agency science groups (including the Lead Co-ordination Networks funded by JNCC), so that inter-agency work continues to meet country conservation bodies' needs and work supported by JNCC is more sharply focused on JNCC priorities;
- vii. technical support for a review of the UK's network of terrestrial and coastal Special Protection Areas to meet the requirements of the Birds Directive.

## **7. Resources**

### ***Core Government funding***

7.1 JNCC's core financial settlement for 2010/11 is £9,970k. This comprises:

- i. £1,872k provided by Defra for 'reserved' activities (advice on international nature conservation and work in the marine environment beyond territorial waters). This represents a 2.5% reduction compared to 2009/10;
- ii. £2,401k provided by Defra for work on Marine Protected Areas and marine surveillance<sup>2</sup> (to be incorporated within Defra's 'reserved' funding);
- iii. £5,697k provided by Defra and devolved administrations for 'UK co-ordination' activities (work that is relevant to all parts of the UK). This represents a 2.5% reduction compared to 2009/10.

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<sup>2</sup> In addition, £830k for integrated survey and site verification will be directed by JNCC. At present this sum is split between the JNCC/Cefas partnership agreement and Defra Marine Division. Once further requirements have been clarified, the funds held by Defra will be added to the Cefas agreement and/or will be given to JNCC as income.

7.2 The funding will be provided by Defra and the devolved administrations as follows:

| All figures in £k   | 2009/10            | 2010/11            |
|---|--------------------|--------------------|
| Defra (direct funding)  | 1,920 <sup>3</sup> | 4,273 <sup>4</sup> |
| Defra (through Natural England)                                       | 2,878              | 2,806              |
| Scottish Government (through Scottish Natural Heritage)               | 1,695              | 1,653              |
| Welsh Assembly Government (through the Countryside Council for Wales) | 847                | 826                |
| Department of the Environment, Northern Ireland                       | 423                | 412                |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>7,763</b>       | <b>9,970</b>       |

***Other income***

7.3 In addition to its core financial settlement, JNCC will receive funding for specific projects from Government departments and other partners, as well as from sales of publications and other miscellaneous sources. At the time of writing other income is anticipated to be £918k although this figure is likely to vary to some extent prior to, and during the year.

***Planned use of funding***

7.4 The following table shows the planned use of core Government funding and other income.

| All figures in £k                 | Full planned costs | Core Government funding |              | Other income |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------|--------------|
|                                   |                    | UK co-ordination        | Reserved     |              |
| International nature conservation | 1,629              | 628                     | 785          | 216          |
| Marine nature conservation        | 4,880              | 921                     | 3,488        | 471          |
| Evidence and standards            | 2,928              | 2,722                   | -            | 206          |
| Governance and corporate services | 1,451              | 1,426                   | -            | 25           |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>10,888</b>      | <b>5,697</b>            | <b>4,273</b> | <b>918</b>   |

<sup>3</sup> This figure varies from that shown in the 2009/10 business plan as funding that it was understood would be provided as grant in aid was subsequently provided as income.

<sup>4</sup> Includes additional Defra funding for work on marine protected areas and marine surveillance less £830k committed by Defra for survey work for these programmes which JNCC will direct.

7.5 The following table shows the split of core Government funding between salaries and direct costs.

| All figures in £k | 2009/10 out-turn | 2010/11 planned |
|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Salaries          | 4,314            | 5,232           |
| Direct costs      | 3,449            | 4,738           |
| <b>Total</b>      | <b>7,763</b>     | <b>9,970</b>    |

## **8. Budget flexibility and efficiencies in 2010/11**

8.1 In determining the programme of work for 2010/11 JNCC has worked within significant constraints on short- and medium-term flexibility to respond to budget reductions.

8.2 The majority of our budget is committed to staff salaries (owing to our dependence on skilled and experienced scientific and other specialist staff), long-term biodiversity surveillance contracts, other multi-year service contracts, office rent and rates, and other unavoidable running costs and back-office expenditure.

8.3 We have made significant annual efficiencies in back-office functions in recent years. Whilst JNCC's work programme has grown by almost a third since 2006/07, and new governance and service demands have also arisen from externally-driven requirements, we have met these demands with only a marginal increase in spend in these areas.

8.4 Although there are no easy gains left to make, we will continue to make efficiency savings in 2010/11 through the following measures:

- i. reducing travel costs by increased use of video-conferencing;
- ii. reducing expenditure on JNCC's corporate publications, for instance producing a low-cost annual report to meet statutory obligations supplemented by a short 'annual review' for a wider audience;
- iii. restructuring JNCC's pay system to reduce annual incremental costs;
- iv. rationalising IT expenditure.

8.5 We will also seek opportunities to increase short- and medium-term budget flexibility to enable us to respond to any future funding challenges as effectively as possible.

## **9. Programmes and projects**

9.1 JNCC delivers its work through a series of linked programmes. Medium-term targets and key performance indicators for 2010/11 for each programme are shown in Annex 1.

9.2 Underpinning the published business plan are more detailed plans, including targets for specific projects within each programme. Further information about specific areas of interest is available on request.

## Annex 1. Summary programme information

### 1. Global Advice<sup>5</sup>

#### 1.1 Programme targets

- Provide scientific support to enable effective UK implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), focusing on those MEAs that deliver the greatest nature conservation benefits.
- Provide advice in support of the global conservation of biological and geological diversity, paying particular attention to the target of significantly reducing the rate of global biodiversity loss by 2010 (and subsequent post-2010 targets) and relevant parts of the Government's Public Service Agreement relating to the Millennium Development Goals.
- Collate and publish evidence of potential impacts of the UK economy on global biodiversity based on key sectors (overseas investment, food, forestry, biofuels) that can generate ecosystem impacts and focusing on priority global regions where biodiversity is most significant or vulnerable.

#### 1.2 Key performance indicators for 2010/11

- Provide evidence-based scientific support to Government with respect to priority multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), seeking to take a thematic approach across agreements:
  - provide input to meetings of MEAs, in particular to the 10<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in October 2010 and preparatory meetings, and to technical meetings of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) and the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS);
  - develop JNCC's role in relation to biodiversity aspects of international forest and timber policy (including in relation to carbon management) on the basis of a scoping study completed in 2009/10.
  - take a strategic overview of the scope for complementarity and synergy between listing commercially exploited aquatic animals on MEAs (CITES and CMS) and fisheries management.
- Provide, to agreed service standards, high-quality advice to Animal Health on approximately 20,000 CITES licence consultations *per annum*.
- Publish an annual overview of potential impacts on global biodiversity of the UK economy through trade and investment.

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<sup>5</sup> The Global Advice programme now incorporates the work delivered previously through a separate Global Impacts programme.

## **2. Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies**

### **2.1 Programme target**

- Provide advice 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.

### **2.2 Key performance indicators for 2010/11**

- Provide advice to Overseas Territory and Crown Dependency governments, UK Government and others to support implementation of the UK Government strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Overseas Territories.
- Facilitate the identification and implementation of Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies research priorities, including through the development of information sharing capacity.
- By June 2010, establish regional (Caribbean and South Atlantic) focal points for skill sharing and training, and provide advice, guidance and training to governments of the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, with special emphasis on sourcing funding for nature conservation projects (two training courses to be delivered by November 2010) and invasive alien species and marine issues (suite of cross-territory projects completed by March 2011).

### **3. European Intelligence and Advice**

#### **3.1 Programme targets**

- Inform the work of JNCC, the country conservation bodies, UK Government and devolved administrations by identifying emerging issues, providing intelligence on the development of EU policy and legislation for or affecting the environment, and analysing the potential impact of new proposals.
- Provide evidence-based advice to encourage the integration of sustainable development principles, the ecosystem approach and the protection of biodiversity within the development of EU policies and legislation.

#### **3.2 Key performance indicators for 2010/11**

- Gather intelligence on priority EU policy areas affecting nature conservation and disseminate to the country conservation bodies and other key stakeholders.
- Analyse current and future EU policy priorities and the implications for the work of JNCC and the country conservation bodies during and beyond 2010, taking account of the work programme of the European Commission and Parliament, the 18-month Presidency programme and any implications of the Lisbon Treaty coming into force.
- Provide evidence-based advice to influence the development of EU biodiversity policy post-2010 and other relevant EU policy developments, including the budget review, the EU Sustainable Development Strategy, agriculture and land use, maritime, climate change and energy, transport and the 7<sup>th</sup> Environmental Action Programme.
- Promote a thematic approach to Multilateral Environmental Agreements with EU partners through a stakeholder event in Brussels in summer 2010.

## **4. Sustainability Advice**

### **4.1 Programme target**

- Provide advice to the UK Government, devolved administrations and others on the sustainable use of natural resources, focusing on the goods and services provided by the environment that contribute to human well-being.

### **4.2 Key performance indicators for 2010/11**

- Provide evidence on the practical application of ecosystem services valuation techniques to inform UK positions in advance of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in October 2010 (CBD CoP 10), drawing on the experience of a variety of international and national projects, such as TEEB (The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity) and the UK National Ecosystem Assessment.
- Analyse the biodiversity implications of the outcomes of the 15<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (held in Copenhagen in December 2009), and provide advice based on this analysis to inform UK preparations for CBD CoP 10.
- Provide timely and relevant advice to Defra, the GB Non-Native Species Programme Board and country conservation bodies on the development of the EU Invasive Species Strategy, and ensure that requirements for information on non-native species are addressed within reviews of JNCC's surveillance and data management projects

## **5. Marine Management Advice**

### **5.1 Programme targets**

- Provide scientific advice on legislation, policies and practices affecting nature conservation in the marine environment, having particular regard to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.
- Provide scientific advice on casework concerning UK marine activities affecting nature conservation.
- Provide scientific advice on management requirements and conservation objectives for offshore marine protected areas.

### **5.2 Key performance indicators for 2010/11**

- Ensure that 95% of requests for statutory advice on offshore industries (including oil and gas, renewables and aggregates) are responded to fully within the relevant consultation period.
- Provide advice on offshore marine protected areas:
  - report to Defra and Scottish Government on the second public consultation on offshore Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), and initiate consultation on a third tranche of offshore sites, including an Impact Assessment for each site;
  - develop and communicate conservation objectives and Operations Advice on offshore SACs and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) as they are recommended to Scottish Government and Defra within 12 months of their notification to the European Commission;
  - in co-operation with the country conservation bodies, develop and communicate advice on management of offshore Marine Conservation Zones/Marine Protected Areas.
- Make substantial progress in implementing an inter-agency influencing strategy for the 2012 review of the Common Fisheries Policy.
- Produce customised guidance for specific user groups on legislative requirements concerning disturbance of marine European protected species in offshore areas.

## **6. Marine Mapping and Ecosystem Assessment**

### **6.1 Programme targets**

- Support strategic planning, decision-making and improved management of the marine environment through the provision of marine habitat maps for UK and European waters, together with information on the pressures and associated impacts of human activities.
- Provide scientific advice to support the development and implementation of European marine policies, especially the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive and the OSPAR Convention.

### **6.2 Key performance indicators for 2010/11**

- Contribute to implementation of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) and the OSPAR Convention, particularly through the development of regional guidance on the determination of Good Environmental Status (GES) for biodiversity matters<sup>6</sup> including:
  - applying EU guidance on GES criteria in a regional context;
  - contributing to requirements for the MSFD Initial Assessment of environmental status (due in 2012);
  - developing environmental targets and indicators (due 2012);
  - scoping and initiating development of biodiversity assessment methods and tools to meet MSFD requirements that are compatible with, wherever possible, other UK reporting needs.
- By December 2010, produce broad-scale habitat maps for the Baltic Sea, North Sea, Celtic Seas and Western Mediterranean Sea, as required by the EUSeaMap project.

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<sup>6</sup> This work will contribute to, and be informed by, work to develop a marine biodiversity surveillance and monitoring framework under the Marine Surveillance and Monitoring programme (see section 8 of the business plan).

## **7. Marine Protected Areas**

### **7.1 Programme target**

Support the UK Government and devolved administrations in the implementation of their policies for marine protected areas (MPAs) in UK offshore waters, particularly by engaging stakeholders in decision-taking, identifying new MPAs and advising on national and international policy obligations for MPA networks.

### **7.2 Key performance indicators for 2010/11**

- Progress work to recommend to the UK and Scottish Governments a series of offshore Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), in parallel with work by the country conservation bodies in inshore waters, to fulfil Habitats Directive obligations:
  - recommend two additional offshore SACs;
  - complete analysis to enable the identification of potential new offshore SACs (Submarine structures in the mid-Irish Sea and Solan Bank).
- To fulfil Birds Directive obligations, complete consideration of possible Special Protection Areas (SPAs) in offshore waters and provide advice to Government, and support country conservation bodies through survey and analyses in parallel work in inshore waters:
  - complete spatial analysis and assessment of possible site boundaries to support the identification of potential SPAs for divers and sea ducks;
  - continue area/colony-specific research and survey aimed at identifying marine SPAs for breeding terns (to be completed in 2012).
- Deliver the milestones relevant to JNCC in the identification of new MPAs as agreed by the UK Government and devolved administrations:
  - work in partnership with Natural England to progress four regional Marine Conservation Zone projects to engage regional, national and international stakeholders to propose Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) in English territorial and UK offshore waters adjacent to England, Wales and Northern Ireland by June 2011;
  - work as a member of the Wales MCZ Project Technical Group to develop and use ecological guidance to identify possible MCZ options in Welsh territorial waters;
  - work in partnership with Scottish Government and Scottish Natural Heritage to deliver the offshore component of a project to identify possible Marine Protected Areas in Scottish waters;

- advise the Northern Ireland Environment Agency on technical issues relating to MPAs, in preparation for a future Marine Bill in Northern Ireland
- develop and implement an MPA Communication Strategy to deliver JNCC’s responsibilities to support UK Government in achieving its aims to have a “...well understood and supported...” UK MPA network;
- implement the UK MPA Stakeholder Engagement Strategy to engage and support national and international stakeholders to participate in the development of new MPAs in UK offshore waters.

## **8. Marine Surveillance and Monitoring**

### **8.1 Programme targets**

- Work with UK Government, devolved administrations, the UK Marine Monitoring and Assessment Strategy and others to develop a strategic framework for marine biodiversity surveillance and monitoring that delivers all policy and statutory obligations cost-effectively, and focuses on the most important adverse impacts from human activities to prioritise effort.
- Deliver marine biodiversity surveillance and monitoring beyond 12 nautical miles using the strategic framework to meet Natura 2000, Marine Strategy Framework Directive and other biodiversity policy requirements.

### **8.2 Key performance indicator for 2010/11**

- Develop, in a joint programme with the country conservation bodies, options for an operational surveillance and monitoring programme for marine habitats, birds and cetaceans that will aim to meet UK statutory and policy requirements in an integrated manner. In particular, develop:
  - a process for designing habitat survey stratification, including availability of the underpinning maps;
  - methods;
  - a sampling strategy and objectives for seabird and cetacean pilot surveys; and
  - GIS files for activities and pressures.
- Develop options for monitoring offshore marine protected areas, and produce a draft method for assessing progress against management objectives at site and network level.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> This work has been included in the plan by mutual agreement between JNCC and Defra although additional funding has not been confirmed. If additional funding cannot be made available adjustments will be made within the habitats, birds and cetaceans component of the programme.

## **9. Conservation Advice**

### **9.1 Programme targets**

- Provide advice, co-ordination, and information to support joint approaches to the conservation of biodiversity and geodiversity across the countries of the UK, including advice on objectives and common standards, where it is necessary to do this at a UK level.
- Provide advice on approaches to the conservation of biodiversity and geodiversity for application in European and international contexts.

### **9.2 Key performance indicators for 20010/11**

- Support the Phase 1 review of the UK's terrestrial and coastal network of Special Protection Areas, delivering quality-assured reports from the technical review contract by March 2011, as a step towards agreed recommendations in October 2011.
- By January 2011, oversee a revision of, and consultation on, the guidance for the selection of biological Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
- Following completion of the review of inter-agency science groups in 2009/10 establish new arrangements to support inter-agency working on priority themes.
- Provide advice to support UK-wide and international conservation of geodiversity:
  - by March 2011, complete online publication of submitted information and site descriptions from the Geological Conservation Review;
  - by December 2010, develop a strategy for JNCC's work on geoconservation, in consultation with country conservation bodies.

## **10. Surveillance and Monitoring**

### **10.1 Programme targets**

- Establish and maintain, with partners, a strategy for co-ordination of terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity surveillance in the UK so that sufficient information is obtained to measure biodiversity outcomes, detect and attribute causes of change in biodiversity, and meet the needs for reporting at country, UK and international levels.
- Undertake, with partners, surveillance to detect spatial and temporal population change in selected bird, mammal and butterfly species, and range change in many other plant and invertebrate species; where possible identify the likely causes of the trends; periodically review and align schemes to fit the surveillance strategy.

### **10.2 Key performance indicators for 2010/11**

- By May 2010, update the long-, medium- and short-term trends for selected bird, butterfly and mammal species, and by January 2011 publish improved interpretation of the trends in birds and mammals.
- By June 2010, working with the country conservation bodies, identify the country-specific and shared solutions to meeting gaps in surveillance which must be addressed in order to meet Habitats Directive obligations (as well as other policy objectives), and by September 2010 plan implementation of the necessary surveillance programmes.
- By August 2010, determine the requirements for information about the status and trends of lesser known species (e.g. invertebrates, mosses and liverworts, lichens and fungi), and by January 2011 adjust JNCC's investment in the surveillance mechanisms that can help deliver these needs.
- By February 2011, publish the results of an analysis of surveillance data sets and research findings to quantify the impact of air pollution on nature conservation objectives.
- By March 2011, working with partners, complete research into the remote sensing and vegetation sampling methods most likely to improve efficiency and effectiveness in national surveillance schemes and identify priority actions, including further research needed to translate the innovations into operational practice.

## **11. Access to Information**

### **11.1 Programme targets**

- Work with key suppliers of biological and geological diversity and other relevant data within the UK to set up efficient data management, licensing and exchange practices to ensure that, as more data are collected, they can be rapidly made available to, and integrated into, nature conservation policy and practice.
- Promote best practice, innovation and minimum standards in data access and management in Europe and globally, as a contribution to the development of a shared, accessible biodiversity knowledge base for use at all relevant geographical scales.
- Ensure effective use of the internet in providing JNCC's partners with access to data and information, including the outputs of analyses.

### **11.2 Key performance indicators for 2010/11**

- Continue to develop and roll out tools developed under the National Biodiversity Network (NBN) to establish efficient and timely flows of quality-assured species data and facilitate their integration into a range of uses across the network.
- Consider the emerging requirements for measurement, assessment and reporting on different properties of biodiversity as part of an ecosystem approach, including:
  - reviewing the information needs required to support them;
  - developing and testing new analytical procedures for existing biological records and surveillance data;
  - making recommendations on improving access to and use of the current information base for these applications.
- Provide a technical support service for the Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS), enabling the system to be developed to meet user requirements, including improved functions for geographical aggregation and disaggregation, and maximising the use of the data available through the NBN.

## **12. Policy-relevant Information and Reporting**

### **12.1 Programme targets**

- Facilitate the application of the best available scientific evidence, relevant to conservation of biodiversity and geodiversity at UK and international scales, in policy development and reporting.
- Produce information products, including indicators, to meet the needs of the UK Government and devolved administrations and for reporting purposes.
- Provide advice on European and global initiatives to develop a more robust evidence base for biodiversity conservation.

### **12.2 Key performance indicators for 2010/11**

- By June 2011, achieve further harmonisation and rationalisation of reporting and monitoring work to meet UK, European and other international requirements by influencing relevant negotiations, promoting an outcome-oriented and indicator-based approach, and agreeing common and flexible approaches with the country conservation bodies and the UK Biodiversity Action Plan partnership.
- Contribute to the development of an efficient and effective international science-policy interface at European and global levels, building on the many existing components, through:
  - by December 2010, providing input to negotiations on establishment of an International Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and a European network of knowledge;
  - ongoing representation of national user needs other relevant international science initiatives.
- Support joint activities with research users, research funders and researchers, including two meetings of the UK Biodiversity Research Advisory Group (BRAG), two meetings of the Global Biodiversity Sub-Committee (GBSC) and a workshop with the British Ecological Society, to identify emerging issues and prioritise research needs, and to promote a shared research agenda with the scientific community and UK and European research funders.

## **13. Governance and Support Services<sup>8</sup>**

### **13.1 Programme targets**

- Provide a cost-effective and efficient service that ensures that JNCC can meet its statutory and public sector obligations, and that supports JNCC staff and Joint Committee members in meeting their objectives.
- Undertake a process of continuous improvements to reduce the cost of the programme.
- Support other programmes to effectively disseminate advice and information to decision-makers and other key stakeholders.

### **13.2 Key performance indicators for 2010/11**

- Implement priorities arising from the review of the programme (completed in 2009/10) to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of corporate services in supporting delivery and in meeting external requirements, including:
  - prepare plans for Peterborough office accommodation beyond 2011 and progress them to completion by March 2011;
  - streamline specified administrative and financial processes, using collaborative opportunities where appropriate;
  - refocus communications activities and products, and along with other International Year of Biodiversity partners disseminate advice and information to promote understanding of biodiversity.
- Strengthen HR and financial planning systems and change management capabilities to support JNCC in efficiently and effectively refocussing its resources on changing priorities.

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<sup>8</sup> The scope of the work and resources of the programme includes governance of JNCC and JNCC Support Co and external communications as well as ‘back-office’ services.

**Annex 2. High-level relationships between the work of Defra, Natural England and JNCC**

Significant components of some of Defra’s Departmental Strategic Objectives relate to international nature conservation and work in offshore waters. They relate directly to JNCC’s international and marine programmes but have no equivalent in Natural England’s strategic outcomes.

| <b>Defra Departmental Strategic Objective</b>  | <b>Natural England Strategic Outcome</b>  | <b>JNCC programmes</b>   |
|--|---|--|
| A healthy, resilient, productive and diverse natural environment   | <p>A healthy natural environment</p> <p>Sustainable use of the natural environment</p> <p>A secure environmental future</p> | <p><b>International</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global Advice</li> <li>• Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies</li> <li>• European Intelligence and Advice</li> <li>• Sustainability Advice</li> </ul> <p><b>Marine</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marine Management Advice</li> <li>• Marine Mapping and Ecosystem Assessment</li> <li>• Marine Protected Areas</li> <li>• Marine Surveillance and Monitoring</li> </ul> <p><b>Evidence and standards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation Advice</li> <li>• Surveillance and Monitoring</li> <li>• Access to Information</li> <li>• Policy-relevant Information and Reporting</li> </ul> |
| A society that is adapting to the effects of climate change, through a national programme of action and a contribution to international action | <p>A healthy natural environment</p> <p>Sustainable use of the natural environment</p> <p>A secure environmental future</p> | <p><b>International</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global Advice</li> <li>• European Intelligence and Advice</li> <li>• Sustainability Advice</li> </ul> <p><b>Marine</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marine Management Advice</li> </ul>   |
| Sustainable, low carbon and resource efficient patterns of consumption   | Sustainable use of the natural environment  | <p><b>International</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global Advice</li> <li>• European Intelligence and</li> </ul>   |

| <b>Defra Departmental Strategic Objective</b>                                      | <b>Natural England Strategic Outcome</b>  | <b>JNCC programmes</b>  |
|--|---|---|
| and production   |   | <p>Advice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainability Advice</li> </ul> <p><b>Marine</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marine Management Advice</li> </ul>   |
| An economy and a society that are resilient to environmental risk                  | <p>A healthy natural environment</p> <p>Sustainable use of the natural environment</p> <p>A secure environmental future</p> | <p><b>International</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainability Advice</li> </ul>   |
| Championing sustainable development  | Part of Natural England's purpose   | JNCC has a statutory responsibility in relation to sustainable development  |
| A thriving farming and food sector with an improving net environmental impact      | <p>Sustainable use of the natural environment</p> <p>A secure environmental future</p>                                      | <p><b>International</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European Intelligence and Advice</li> <li>• Sustainability Advice</li> </ul> <p><b>Marine</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marine Management Advice</li> </ul> |
| A respected department delivering efficient and high quality services and outcomes | Distinctive public body   | <p><b>Support services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance and corporate services</li> </ul>  |

**Annex 3. High-level relationships between the work of Scottish Government, SNH and JNCC**

| <b>Scottish Government national outcome</b>   | <b>SNH strategic priority</b>  | <b>JNCC programmes</b>   |
|---|--|--|
| 2. We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people            | Supporting the Scottish economy  | <b>International</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainability Advice</li> </ul>   |
| 12. We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it for future generations                    | Caring for nature<br><br>Responding to climate change<br><br>Supporting the Scottish economy | <b>International</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global Advice</li> <li>• European Intelligence and Advice</li> <li>• Sustainability Advice</li> </ul> <b>Marine</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marine Management Advice</li> <li>• Marine Mapping and Ecosystem Assessment</li> <li>• Marine Protected Areas</li> <li>• Marine Surveillance and Monitoring</li> </ul> <b>Evidence and standards</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation Advice</li> <li>• Surveillance and Monitoring</li> <li>• Access to Information</li> <li>• Policy-relevant Information and Reporting</li> </ul> |
| 14. We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production                         | Caring for nature<br><br>Responding to climate change  | <b>International</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global Advice</li> <li>• Sustainability Advice</li> </ul> <b>Marine</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marine Management Advice</li> </ul>   |
| 15. Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs | Delivering a high quality public service   | <b>Support services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance and Support Services</li> </ul>  |

**Annex 4. High-level relationships between the work of the Welsh Assembly Government, CCW and JNCC**

| <b>Environment Strategy Action Plan theme</b>   | <b>CCW programme</b>                   | <b>JNCC programmes</b>   |
|---|--|--|
| <p><b>1. Biodiversity</b><br/>We will meet our international obligations and the urgent need to halt the loss of biodiversity and aid its recovery on sites of international, Welsh and local importance, and in the wider environment</p>  | <p>Natural Wales<br/>Green economy</p> | <p><b>International</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global Advice</li> <li>• European Intelligence and Advice</li> <li>• Sustainability Advice</li> </ul> <p><b>Evidence and standards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation Advice</li> <li>• Surveillance and Monitoring</li> <li>• Access to Information</li> <li>• Policy-relevant Information and Reporting</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>2. Marine</b><br/>We need to maintain and enhance the quality of our marine environment, and work actively with stakeholders to manage the marine environment in Wales over the longer term</p>   | <p>Natural Wales<br/>Green economy</p> | <p><b>Marine</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marine Management Advice</li> <li>• Marine Mapping and Ecosystem Assessment</li> <li>• Marine Protected Areas</li> <li>• Marine Surveillance and Monitoring</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>5. Ecosystem services</b><br/>Landscape and catchment-scale management will help sustain the essential ecosystem services that underpin our economy. We will work to ensure that our environmental priorities for land management – in particular biodiversity, water and soil carbon - are delivered in an integrated way.</p> | <p>Green economy</p>                   | <p><b>International</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainability Advice</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>6. Research and evidence</b><br/>We will ensure that the principle of evidence-based policy making and partnership working across the public sector is actioned through partnership on research and evidence</p>  | <p>Natural Wales</p>                   | <p><b>Evidence and standards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveillance and Monitoring</li> <li>• Access to Information</li> <li>• Policy-relevant Information and Reporting</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>9. Partnership</b><br/>We recognise the value of partners across the Assembly and outside in enhancing the environment for Wales</p>  | <p>Managing for the future</p>         | <p><b>Support services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance and Corporate Services</li> </ul>   |

**Annex 5. High-level relationships between the work of the Department of the Environment in Northern Ireland and JNCC**

| <b>Department of the Environment Strategic Objective</b>   | <b>Department of the Environment PSA target</b>  | <b>JNCC programmes</b>  |
|--|--|---|
| 1. Protect and promote the natural environment and built heritage  | To reduce significantly the loss in biodiversity by 2010, and to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2016 | <p><b>International</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Global Advice</li> <li>• European Intelligence and Advice</li> <li>• Sustainability Advice</li> </ul> <p><b>Marine</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marine Management Advice</li> <li>• Marine Mapping and Ecosystem Assessment</li> <li>• Marine Protected Areas</li> <li>• Marine Surveillance and Monitoring</li> </ul> <p><b>Evidence and standards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conservation Advice</li> <li>• Surveillance and Monitoring</li> <li>• Access to Information</li> <li>• Policy-relevant Information and Reporting</li> </ul> |
| 5. To support the Minister, Permanent Secretary and senior management, and oversee the securing and allocation of resources to enable the Department to achieve its business aims and meet its legal and equity obligations. | -  | <p><b>Support services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance and Corporate Services</li> </ul>  |