



Progress against the Triennial Review implementation plan

November 2013

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Joint Nature Conservation Committee

Progress against the Triennial Review implementation plan

Paper by Sue McQueen

Report conclusion and supporting information		Proposed action and timescales				Progress
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1. JNCC will build on its current partnership working with stakeholders, and in particular improve engagement with civil society, including with the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies.	<i>Para 22.</i> JNCC's relationships with its customers, including the UK Government, Devolved Administrations, country conservation bodies and civil society could be improved. This includes drawing further on the expertise available from other organisations particularly volunteers to deliver JNCC's aims.	1a. Reinvigorate the JNCC-NGO forum (with extended membership and with a separate Overseas Territories forum) as a mechanism for engaging with NGOs at a senior level on UK issues, including an annual session with Joint Committee.	September 2013 then ongoing	Revise membership lists, TOR and set up meetings.	Marcus Yeo	A UK JNCC-NGO forum with expanded membership will meet for the first time on 11 November. A new Overseas Territories JNCC-NGO forum will meet for the first time in January 2014.
	<i>Para 23.</i> Partnership working with civil society could be	1b. Strengthen liaison with Environment Links: i) inviting them to	TBA	Write to Environment Links.	Paul Rose	How JNCC most effectively engages with Environment Links will be

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	improved in several areas such as the collection of biodiversity evidence in the terrestrial and marine environments (see Annex 1) in the UK and advising on nature conservation in the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies. This will help achieve the best and informed environmental outcomes, while maintaining and enhancing JNCC's close relationship with Defra, the Devolved Administrations and country conservation bodies, and achieving better value for the tax payer.	meet with Committee every 2 years in accordance with the meeting rotation cycle, and ii) attending country Environment Links strategic meetings.				discussed at the first meeting of the new UK JNCC-NGO forum (1a) and acted on thereafter. All Environment Links are members of this forum.
		1c. Identify where existing partnerships with NGOs could be developed to produce additional outputs, in particular in making evidence on Overseas Territories Biodiversity available.	November 2013	Review current partnership agreements, assess scope and optimum timing for change and likely impact on costs and present to EMB.	Lawrence Way	Partnership agreements are being reviewed as they come up for renegotiation. An Overseas Territories JNCC-NGO forum has been established as reported under 1a.
		<i>Actions to improve relationships with UK Government, Devolved Administrations and Country Conservation</i>				

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		<i>Bodies are shown against other conclusions.</i>				
2. JNCC, in collaboration with Defra, devolved administrations and the country conservation bodies will review its internal arrangements to ensure that it is able to promote high-quality science, based on agreed priorities, and provide a clear voice for the UK nature conservation bodies nationally and abroad.	Para 24. Some stakeholders asked that JNCC examine whether it had the best arrangements in place internally to provide strong scientific leadership on biodiversity and ecosystems that Government and other stakeholders require. JNCC's strengths in coordination of surveillance of terrestrial and marine biodiversity were widely acknowledged, including the importance of partnerships developed with the voluntary sector and the application of science-based advice to government policy.	2a. Committee to play a stronger role in developing science thinking on key nature conservation issues across the UK supported by papers from staff in collaboration with Chief Scientists Group and other inter-agency groups.	November 2013	Chief Scientists to suggest topics for discussion. Role of protected areas and evidence strategy will be discussed by Committee in November.	Paul Rose	The Chief Scientists Group has established a process to advise Committee on topics for discussion. They will also facilitate wider country body engagement with the production of Committee papers.
		2b. Develop and implement new evidence quality assurance policies, standards and procedures.	November 2013	Committee sign off followed by implementation.	Paul Rose	Committee approval for a new JNCC evidence quality policy will be sought at the November meeting. Subject to approval a targeted pilot will be in place from December. Full roll out will take place in April 2014.
		2c. Investigate	September	Discussion with	Marcus Yeo	This is partly

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		further the role JNCC (including Committee) should play in science leadership.	2013	<p>Defra's Chief Scientist Adviser including i) respective roles of Defra and JNCC, ii) engagement with devolved bodies, iii) the purpose of a clear focal point for science quality within JNCC, and iv) what is meant by JNCC having "a clear voice nationally and abroad".</p> <p>Chief Scientists to provide proposals to Committee on this issue to facilitate discussion including the role JNCC should play in relation to providing a clear voice for UK nature conservation</p>	and Paul Rose	<p>discharged by 2a.</p> <p>Marcus Yeo and Peter Bridgewater have met Ian Boyd to discuss JNCC's role.</p> <p>Further work is needed around dovetailing the JNCC role with similar roles within its key stakeholders and establishing a clear JNCC voice. Lessons will be learned from JNCC's implementation of its new evidence quality policy and November Committee's discussion of the thought leadership papers (2a).</p>

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				bodies nationally and abroad.		
		2d. Contribute to the evidence workstream of Defra's Strategic Alignment Programme, in particular to support prioritisation and integration of evidence work across Defra bodies taking account of the requirements of the devolved administrations.	August 2013 onwards	Ongoing input from directors and other senior staff. Contribution of 0.8 FTE to Defra project team.	Paul Rose and Steve Gibson	JNCC has seconded two staff members (both half-time) to the internal Defra team, is contributing information as requested and is actively engaged with all associated groups, workshops and discussions.
3. Defra and devolved administrations, working with the Joint Committee, will explore options to ensure that the membership of the	<i>Para 25.</i> As a consequence of the provisions of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, the representation on JNCC's Committee might not fairly reflect all its principal	3a. Implement agreed changes to Committee/ Board arrangements to give a clearer line of sight to the devolved administrations. These include incorporating	November 2013	Provide paper for Committee sign off in November.	Sue McQueen	Committee approval for the new arrangements is being sought at the November meeting and they will be implemented immediately subject to approval.

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Committee and its ways of working allow the views of all sponsor bodies to be better represented. This could include exploring legislative options to provide eligibility to the sponsor Department in Northern Ireland to be represented on the Joint Committee.	sponsors. This is especially true for Northern Ireland, whose structures differ from those in Great Britain. We will explore options to address this, including possible legislative change. Also see comments against conclusions 1 and 6 and actions against conclusion 6.	business management matters into Joint Committee meetings (attended by country conservation body/NIEA executives) and rotating two Committee meetings per year round the countries to provide opportunities for devolved administrations to engage with Committee.				
		3b. Prepare options for improving Committee engagement with DoE(NI) in collaboration with NIEA and CNCC for discussion with DoE(NI).	September 2013	Collate information about how NI engages with Committee at present and provide proposals for how this could be strengthened, particularly in relation to DoE (NI) but also in relation	Sue McQueen	Damian Campbell, Director of the Marine Division in the NI Department of Environment, will attend in Committee meetings, alongside Helen Anderson from NIEA and the formal Committee members

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				<p>to other administrations (this will include joining up executive level representation at Committee and JNCC sponsors group.</p> <p>Discuss proposals with NIEA/ CNCC and DoE(NI) and other administrations as appropriate.</p>		<p>from CNCC.</p> <p>A representative from the Marine Division has also joined the inter-agency Chief Scientists Group alongside the NIEA representative.</p>
		3c. Implement a structured approach to managing relationships with sponsors, ensuring effective communication and consultation.	September 2013	EMB sign off draft proposed assignment of JNCC Directors to each key contact and confirm expectations re ensuring effective communication, consultation and sharing of resulting information.	Marcus Yeo	<p>Responsibility for working with key stakeholders has been assigned to the Chief Executive and Directors and methods for sharing information have been agreed.</p> <p>Ways to better join up executive level representation, Joint</p>

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						Committee and JNCC Sponsors Group remain to be explored.
4. There is currently no strong evidence to move all offshore marine delivery functions from JNCC to country conservation bodies such as Natural England. However, the Scottish and Welsh Administrations have confirmed that they will want to consider this again in due course.	<p><i>Para 28.</i> This assessment [of EA, NE and JNCC marine functions] identified further scope to improve the way in which certain marine functions are delivered such as better join up between JNCC and NE in providing marine conservation advice. Stakeholders, in particular those from the renewable energy sector, expressed some concern about clarity of NE and JNCC's roles around the delivery of advice, in particular for offshore renewable cases.</p> <p><i>Annex 1.</i> Examining</p>	4a. Committee to have a strategic orientation discussion. Further action subsequently.	November 2013			The discussion has been deferred until the March 2014 Committee meeting once issues relating to delegation of renewables casework have been resolved (see 5a).

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	qualitative costs and benefits showed there might be some benefits to customer service from moving marine conservation advice to conservation agencies but it was recognised that national marine customers would still need to engage with different agencies in different parts of the UK. Moving all conservation advice delivery to country conservation bodies was considered to have a potentially destabilising effect on JNCC and possibly affect the delivery of its UK coordination work.					
5. JNCC and Natural England will work more collaboratively when providing marine conservation	As for conclusion 4 above. <i>Annex 1.</i> The tools for [enhancing join up of conservation advice	5a. Committee decision regarding possible delegation of renewable energy casework in offshore English waters to Natural	August 2013	Draft paper and delegation document for circulation to Committee	John Goold	Committee approval for the delegation is being sought at the November meeting. Preparatory stages of implementation began in August but

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advice that spans the 12 nautical mile boundary. In particular they will explore further the delegation of renewable energy advice from JNCC to country conservation bodies including Natural England. This should produce a more streamlined and efficient service to the customer.	between delivery bodies without making formal changes to role, functions or significant organisational changes] include: improving communication with stakeholders – better outward communication to clarify the role of Agencies and aid signposting of advice; formal agreements between agencies that set out roles and responsibilities in the provision of advice; building on existing powers for inter-agency delegation of responsibility; and contractual arrangements for specific tasks.	England.				protracted funding discussions within Government and between Government and JNCC/ NE have led to a delay in the delegation being made by the target date.
		5b. If delegation is agreed – implement delegation and provide support to NE until handover is completed.	Dec 2013 (TBC)		John Goold	As for 5a above.
6. Defra and Devolved Administrations, in collaboration	<i>Para 30.</i> ... there was a strong appetite for change in terms of clearly identifying	6a. Support sponsors in reviewing funding streams and	August 2013	Provide information and subsequent	Sue McQueen	Work was completed early in October with new funding streams and formula

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with JNCC, will undertake an analysis of the funding of the JNCC and a review of the funding formula to: determine a fair apportionment of grant-in-aid going forward; secure best value for money; and provide clarity on how JNCC delivers its functions for the sponsoring bodies.	exactly what the various contributions from UK Government and from devolved administrations pay for in terms of delivery. This would not only improve transparency for the sponsor organisations, but also improve accountability and help achieve better value for money for both taxpayers and customers ... JNCC and Defra will be working with the Devolved Administrations on an Analysis of Funding of the JNCC, along with a review of the funding formula, to ensure a fair apportionment of how grant-in-aid is determined going forward.	formula through the provision of information providing a clear line of sight between work areas and beneficiaries.		support.		provisionally agreed by Defra and devolved administrations. These provide transparency and a clear relationship between funding responsibility and benefits.
		6b. Review and revise reporting and associated support systems to align them with external and internal reporting requirements.	December 2013 for implementation in 2014/15.	Seek feedback from sponsors about desired changes. Using this and June Committee feedback develop proposals .	Sue McQueen	Work has begun to establish information required and associated format based on feedback obtained through the funding review and Committee discussion. Consultation with sponsors will be undertaken prior to implementation.
		6c. Plan and begin preparatory work to enable the value for money of in-house provision of services to be	September 2013 onwards	Develop information for costing comparisons, establish changes needed to enable	Sue McQueen	A new Governance and Corporate Services strategy has been agreed and will be put in place, subject to necessary

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		assessed against provision by the new Shared Service Centre governed by Cabinet Office.		effective engagement, develop business case.		investment being provided. The aim is to develop internal services and associated ways of working to allow fairer comparison with shared service provision.
		6d. Contribute to Defra's Strategic Alignment Programme, in particular to establish where common corporate services across the Defra network can secure better value for money for JNCC (this covers corporate services not provided by the Shared Service Centre such as IT and procurement).	Already commenced	Not yet clear	Sue McQueen	JNCC is represented on the Defra Network Leadership Group advising on Strategic Alignment. Currently JNCC is largely out of scope because the proposed model of a corporate services organisation for the Defra network and associated governance and control is inconsistent with JNCC's accountability to all four UK administrations. However, we intend to track

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						developments in order to take up any opportunities that would allow us to save money whilst retaining an appropriate level of control over resources.
	<i>Page 14.</i> Defra and the Devolved Administrations will work with JNCC to implement the conclusions in this report ... JNCC will provide an implementation report to Defra and the Devolved Administrations by June 2014.		June 2014			Interim report provided.

RAG Status:	Definition
GREEN	Action completed or on track for completion by the target date.
AMBER	Progress has been made and action is expected to be achieved within a reasonable timeframe but the target date has been, or is expected to be missed.
RED	No progress has been made or problems have arisen which may prevent delivery within a reasonable timeframe.