

**Global biodiversity mechanisms:
a thematic review of recent developments and future evidence needs**

Strand Palace Hotel, London 20th May 2009

Thematic Briefing

**Island issues
(especially relating to the UK Overseas Territories &
Crown Dependencies)**

May 2009

Visit: <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/MEA-event>



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Briefing note: Island issues (especially relating to the UK Overseas Territories & Crown Dependencies)

Outputs from relevant MEA meetings

Issues relating to islands have been discussed specifically at the following meetings in 2008.

CBD CoP9 (May 2008)

Decision IX/21: [Island Biodiversity](#)

World Conservation Congress (October 2008)

Resolution 4.067: [Advancing island conservation and sustainable livelihoods](#)

Resolution 4.079: [The European Union and its overseas entities faced with climate change and biodiversity loss](#)

Resolution 4.032: [Coordination of the Pacific Ocean 2020 Challenge](#)

Islands are a cross-cutting theme in their own right and the nature of islands and their biodiversity make specific themes, such as climate change and invasive alien species, especially critical. Islands are also highly relevant from a UK perspective, notably in how we implement the various MEAs in our predominantly insular Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies and also in the numerous islands around the coast of the metropolitan UK. Islands, as a topic, also have prominence in the CBD which adopted a [Programme of work on island biodiversity and protected areas](#) at its 8th Conference of the Parties ([Decision VIII/1](#)) with almost 50 actions under 11 goals. The Global Islands Partnership ([GLISPA](#)) is recognised by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) as a partnership to advance the implementation of the CBD 2010 biodiversity target, to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss, and implement the programmes of work on island biodiversity and protected areas.

Other recent relevant initiatives included a conference on *The European Union and its Overseas Entities: Strategies to Counter Climate Change and Biodiversity Loss*¹ held in Reunion (July 2008).

The event was co-ordinated by the IUCN under the auspices of the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The [message from Reunion](#) has a number of island related recommendations around themes like climate change, invasive species, economic valuation, the role of civil society, sustainable development and energy etc.

Building on the message from Reunion, the IUCN World Conservation Congress adopted one Resolution (of three particularly relevant to islands – see above) calling on the EU to provide responses to the recommendations of the message. Other island-related resolutions adopted at the 4th

¹ <http://www.reunion2008.eu/>

World Congress include those on marine biodiversity, marine protected areas, fisheries, the Mediterranean, the Arctic, mangrove conservation and climate change adaptation.

Other MEA/Island developments from 2008 onwards

MEA reporting requirements – new developments for islands in 2008/09. The reporting burden arising from MEAs is often a problem for island States and Territories. The South Pacific Environmental Regional Programme (SPREP) is currently commissioning the Australian Government to investigate ways to reduce the burden of reporting to 5 biodiversity related MEA²s through the use of a consolidated reporting template that is tailored to meet the needs and reporting capacity of Pacific Island Countries (PICs).

Development of island ‘Natura 2000-like’ voluntary scheme: BEST. The European Commission is developing the concept of a voluntary scheme for **B**iodiversity and **E**cosystem **S**ervices in **T**erritories of European Overseas Countries and Territories that is similar to the Natura 2000 network. This initiative is being led by DG Environment, and there have been consultations around the initial concept with OT and relevant Member State governments and NGOs

UK initiatives to support implementation of MEAs in UKOTs

- The Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on Ecosystems and Biodiversity is meeting on the 11th May where they will consider a **strategy** for HMG input into biodiversity conservation in the UKOTs. The strategy includes improving communications between UK and UK OTs in relation to MEAs.
- An [Overseas Territories Research and Training Programme](#) has been developed which is based around [research priorities](#) that have been identified by the UK OTs.

² The 5 MEAs covered in this project are: Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) – Biennial report only; Convention on Migratory Species (CMS); Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar); and World Heritage Convention (WHC).

Issues for possible discussion

Key implementation requirements:

- What do MEAs mean to OTs/CDs and other islands?
- Are MEAs relevant to OTs/CDs? What added value do they bring?
- What are the main barriers for OTs/CDs in implementing and complying with MEAs?
- How do MEA-related issues in the OTs and CDs compare with those in islands around the metropolitan UK – are there common issues?

Key emerging issues

- What are the key emerging issues and how ready are we to respond to them?
- Invasive aliens are a key issue – but are the EU or GB invasives strategies relevant to OTs and CDs?

Evidence and research needs:

- What are the key gaps in evidence base for OTs/CDs (building on the work already done – see above - rather than starting from scratch)

Science - Policy interface:

- What are the policy needs/drivers in OTs/CDs? (national, UK, EU, international)
- Which have most impact/influence?
- What are the evidence needs to support the policy?
- Does the policy drive the evidence agenda or *vice versa* or neither? Which should it be?

Identify priorities

- What are the main priorities for islands/OTs/CDs
 - Themes
 - MEAs
 - Processes

Appendix 1. Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) which have been ratified by the UK and which have been extended to the UK's Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories. (Source – Foreign & Commonwealth Office; this table should be seen as indicative only until subject to confirmation).

	CBD	CITES	CMS	CMS - ACAP	CMS - Eurobats	CMS - IOSEA	Ramsar
UK	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bailiwick of Jersey	-	X	-	-	X	-	X
Bailiwick of Guernsey	-	X	-	-	X	-	X
Isle of Man	-	X	X	-	X	-	X
Anguilla	-	-	-	-	-	-	X
Bermuda	-	X	X	-	-	-	X
BAT	-	-	-	X	-	-	-
BIOT	-	X	X	-	-	X	X
BVI	X	X	X	-	-	-	X
Cayman Islands	X	X	X	-	-	-	X
Cyprus SBA's	-	-	X	-	-	-	-
Falkland Islands	-	X	X	X	-	-	X
Gibraltar	X	X	X	-	X	-	X
Montserrat	-	X	X	-	-	-	X
Pitcairn	-	X	X	-	-	-	X
St Helena & dependencies	X	X	X	-	-	-	X
SGSSI	-	tbc	X	X	-	-	X
TCI	-	-	X	-	-	-	X

UK territories: BAT – British Antarctic Territory; BIOT – British Indian Ocean Territory; BVI – British Virgin Islands; Cyprus SBAs – Cyprus Sovereign Base Areas; SGSSI – South Georgia & the South Sandwich Islands, TCI – Turks & Caicos Islands. The dependencies of St Helena are Ascension Island and Tristan da Cunha.

MEAs: CBD – Convention on Biological Diversity; CITES – Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species; CMS - Convention on Migratory Species; ACAP – Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses & Petrels; IOSEA – Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of the Marine Turtles of the Indian Ocean and SE Asia.