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JOINT NATURE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

MATTERS ARISING

This paper deals with points not covered by substantive items on the agenda. The numbers relate to the minutes of the September meeting.

9. Marine Natura 2000

9.1 Since the Joint Committee's September meeting we can report that:

- i. Defra have advised us that it considers that offshore habitat SAC boundaries should take due account of the separation between surface vessel and bottom trawl or dredge, and be drawn so as to support the practical management of the site. Defra envisages no legal problems arising from this.
- ii. Following on from the Committee's wish that a wide consultation be undertaken as part of the process in the preparation of site selection and boundary definition guidance, as well as on the site lists themselves, we are currently undertaking a wide consultation on the draft guidance on setting the boundaries of offshore habitat SACs, and on the seaward boundaries of seabird colony SPAs. In order to allow significant time for consultees to respond, and for us to consider the responses, the decision paper on these items has been deferred until the March 2003 Committee meeting.