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JOINT NATURE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

FMPR – PROJECT INITIATION DOCUMENT

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 A Project Initiation Document (PID) attempts to set out the main features of the FMPR project. This includes the way the project is set up, including scope, benefits, constraints and other factors.

2. Project initiation Document

- 2.1 The FMPR sub-group were presented with the PID at their meeting on 24th February 2003. It is a component part of standard project management best practice.
- 2.2 The PID is a live working document and therefore subject to update as the project progresses. For example, the decision to opt for one of the recommended start dates will affect aspects of the planning, milestones and other detail in the PID.
- 2.3 The PID includes an appendix which sets out our latest estimate of costs of implementing FMPR recommendations. This takes account of the recently agreed pay award for English Nature, which has gone some way to bringing the pay terms and conditions within the country agencies more closely into line. The assumption made in the costs table is that the effective commencement date of the new organisation is April 2005. The costs of FMPR implementation have been built into the draft corporate plan for 2003 – 06

DRAFT

ANNEX 1 TO JNCC 03 N02

JNCC
FMPR PROJECT INITIATION DOCUMENT

Prepared by
FMPR Project Team
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Version 2

JOINT NATURE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

FMPR PROJECT INITIATION DOCUMENT

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to map out a plan and process to implement the remaining recommendations of the FMPR report.
- 1.2 The Terms of Reference are to plan for, and effectively implement the FMPR recommendations. The number, scope and timing of tasks can now be more precisely determined following the Joint Committee decision in December 2002, to opt for changes via the Regulatory Reform Act and the CLG framework

2. Scope of FMPR

- 2.1 The FMPR programme is about the review and implementation of an organisational framework and operational procedures for delivering JNCC services, not about reviewing work programmes as such.
- 2.2 **Overall objectives.** We are looking to achieve a smooth implementation of any new arrangements, without significant disruption to ongoing services. The end result must be a better organisational framework which will help to ensure that JNCC continues to deliver its services efficiently and effectively.
- 2.3 Concurrent with the FMPR changes, JNCC is building on the Statement of Strategic Direction approved by Committee in December 2002, by undertaking further assessment of the strategic direction and scope of the organisation. This process will be complete by September 2003, and will provide a context for setting JNCC's future priorities. Implementation of the FMPR recommendations will assist us in delivering these priorities. The FMPR and strategy processes are therefore complementary, and associated organisational changes will need to be aligned.

3. Desired outcomes

- 3.1 A full list of desired outcomes agreed by the Joint Committee, country agency Resource Directors and the JNCC Management Team is shown below, and these will shape the scope of the project :
 - i. revise and publish statement of strategic direction;
 - ii. add additional independent member to committee;
 - iii. JNCC chair to have regular access to ministers;
 - iv. common standards to be extended from GB to UK;

- v. NI to be treated equally as other devolved administrations;
 - vi. 3-year funding and planning mechanisms to be put in place linked to both spending review and country agency plans;
 - vii. main funding via ring-fenced GIA with a new funding stream from Govt;
 - viii. retain flexibility to receive and deploy additional external funding;
 - ix. JNCC to have incorporated status;
 - x. JNCC staff to be employed on a single set of terms and conditions;
 - xi. clearer, simpler accountability lines to be drawn;
- 3.2 These are based on the outcomes included in the recently published government response to the FMPR report.

4. **Guiding principles**

- 4.1 From the agreed list of objectives, the Support Unit together with Resource Directors have developed the following list of guiding principles. The Joint Committee, Resource Directors, and JNCC's Management Team have agreed these principles as a framework for the implementation stage, and they are listed below :
- i. clearer identity and role for JNCC;
 - ii. JNCC's role and work to be determined by the statement of strategic direction;
 - iii. strategy will be used to drive the direction of JNCC;
 - iv. clear planning process with appropriate resourcing over medium term;
 - v. create separate funding streams for govt work;
 - vi. less bureaucracy, administrative simplicity - more streamlined procedures and processes;
 - vii. ensure running costs remain in proportion to overall budget;
 - viii. continued effective collaborative working;
 - ix. incorporated status for JNCC;
 - x. act as good employers in treating staff with an overall sense of fairness;

- xii. single set of terms and conditions for JNCC staff;
 - xiii. clear accountability and empowerment of JNCC MD;
 - xiv. equal footing for NI;
- 4.2 Additionally the FMPR sub-group felt that the guiding principles should also include the intention to ensure that any new arrangements continue to positively encourage the movement of staff to and from the country agencies and JNCC, which is seen by all as being in the interests of the individuals concerned and the respective organisations.
- 4.3 At the same time, and for the sake of clarity, we agreed that the FMPR process is not trying to achieve the following :
- i. separate NDPB status for JNCC;
 - ii. any change affecting the status of JNCC as a committee of the country agencies;
 - iii. a major change of role or function;
 - iv. a move away from the public sector;
 - v. departure from public sector processes for negotiating pay and conditions;
 - vi. solutions which increase bureaucracy;

5. Constraints

- 5.1 A further key factor which has a bearing on the scope of the project is the constraints under which we are working. They include :
- i. Limited resources, particularly in terms of staff time, but also in terms of the budget for the project;
 - ii. Challenging deadlines;
 - iii. Need for practical solutions, commensurate with the size and culture of the organisation;
 - iv. Recognition that some objectives will require primary legislation, and therefore will take longer to achieve;
 - v. The parliamentary timescale for a Regulatory Reform Order;
 - vi. Need to find solutions which are generally acceptable to staff, and other key stakeholders ;

- vii. Need to maintain continuity of on-going work programmes;
- viii. Recognition that some decisions made within JNCC will impact on other partners, particularly the Country Agencies and their staff.

6. Stakeholders

- 6.1 A distinguishing feature of this project is the range of stakeholders. One of the reasons for the long planning timescale is the need to consult regularly with stakeholders as we go through the change process. However we recognise the need for keeping all stakeholders on board throughout.
- 6.2 One of the guiding principles talks about continuation of effective collaborative working, and this is a “must do” particularly in respect of our partnerships with the country agencies, but also with our many other partners. It is vital that we maintain our partnership relationships whilst we undergo the FMPR changes and seek to enhance them once the new organisational framework is in place.

7. Decision making

- 7.1 The Project Team have been looking at some of the key decisions that will have to be made, and the groups or individuals who will have the final say in those decisions. This work will, in turn, help us to incorporate the decision points into a revised plan, which will be prepared following the decisions made at the March Committee meeting.

8. Phases of the implementation programme

- 8.1 Having reached a conclusion at the Joint Committee meeting in December 2002 that most of the FMPR objectives can be met through a combination of Regulatory Reform Act amendments, and a CLG framework, and accepting that a number of objectives will have to wait for a primary legislative opportunity, the next phases of the project are as follows :
 - i. Detailed planning of next, critical phase;
 - ii. Implementation phase;
 - iii. Go-live phase;
 - iv. Post implementation review;

These phases will be reflected in the detailed project plan.

9. Business Issues

Introduction

- 9.1 This section deals with the business issues and costs of implementing the FMPR

FMPR Costs/budget

- 9.2 FMPR outline costs provided to DEFRA, show total costs of only £20K excluding staff salaries for the project in 2002/03. This is a reflection of the slippage which has occurred during the year whilst we have been awaiting the key decision to be made on the preferred organisational model.
- 9.3 A more complete breakdown of future year costs is shown in the attached Annex 1, although it should be noted, that these costs show only the additional resources required within the Support Unit . The FMPR sub-group have requested a fuller picture, to include staff resources deployed on FMPR tasks, which will be available for their next meeting.

Future Funding of JNCC

- 9.4 The funding issue is one that has already been agreed, as reported to the Joint Committee. The current agreed position is that the country agencies will continue to provide the bulk of JNCC funding, through GIA, and a proportion of each country agency's GIA will be ring-fenced for JNCC. It is acknowledged that JNCC will continue to be able to seek additional funding from the oil industry etc. to supplement GIA.
- 9.5 Additionally the principle has been agreed that DEFRA will contribute an additional funding stream for work in which the agencies have no direct interest, e.g. CITES. The precise details of the new arrangement have yet to be worked up.

Staffing matters

- 9.6 One of the most time-consuming tasks will be the transfer of staff, harmonisation to a single set of terms and conditions of service, and protection of employment rights, including pension entitlements.
- 9.7 Current pay arrangements are unsatisfactory, and are a major cause of staff dissatisfaction.
- 9.8 One of the key decisions for the newly formed FMPR sub-group to consider is the mechanism for handling the negotiation involving transfer of staff to a new employer, and then the negotiation of a single set of terms and conditions for those staff. The staff side are already ahead in their plans to form new union

branches to represent their interests, and the management side will need to respond in an appropriate way.

Benefits

- 9.9 The benefits accruing from achieving the agreed objectives will be :
- i. a more secure future for JNCC with greater certainty of funding, and better co-ordinated planning of services.
 - ii. the single set of terms and conditions of employment for staff will remove much of the current dissatisfaction amongst staff and should increase staff morale and improve retention rates
 - iii. simplification of accountabilities, and some greater freedoms will reduce the bureaucracy, and help JNCC become more efficient and effective in delivery of its services.
- 9.10 To assist us in achieving these benefits, we shall be applying the guiding principles outlined in section 4 of this document

10. Other Key Issues

Communications

- 10.1 Communications, both internal and external, will play a vital part in ensuring a smooth transition to new arrangements. Staff are already involved and there is already an expectation that they will continue to be included in the consultation process, along with others. Alongside this, separate thought is being given to communication beyond JNCC, with the country agencies, with DEFRA and the devolved administrations, and with others.
- 10.2 A section has been set up on JNCC's intranet to enable regular communication with staff on FMPR matters. It is updated fortnightly, and includes a facility for individual members of staff to raise concerns or ask questions, followed by a prompt response from the Project Team.
- 10.3 Communication links with the country agencies have been established mainly through periodic meetings with Resource Directors, Heads of HR/Personnel, and staff of the Support Unit.

Risks

- 10.4 There are a number of risks which will need further consideration. The main ones are listed below, together with suggestions for reducing/managing those risks to avoid failure in achievement of the main objectives.

RISK	IMPACT	COUNTERMEASURES
Costs of new arrangements disproportionate to the benefits	Poor value for money.	Evaluate possible solutions on cost/benefit basis, and choose accordingly.
Losing strong focus on straightforward solutions could lead to unnecessary complexity and bureaucracy	Avoidable increase to overhead cost. Reduced resources for front-line work	Maintain focus on simple solutions, where possible, but ones which are also efficient and effective.
Too much compromise leading to a situation where nobody is happy, or the country agencies are allowed to have too big a say, overshadowing views of the Committee and its staff.	JNCC members and staff feel disillusioned	JNCC members and senior management to ensure that JNCC's views are represented, formally and informally, at appropriate times, to ensure satisfactory outcomes.
No improvement to staff satisfaction levels if staff do not perceive new T&C's to be advantageous	Staff continue to feel dissatisfied. May lead to low morale, higher turnover affecting work programmes	Ensure JNCC specific T&C's are fair and give staff a good deal. Offer staff full opportunity for discussion with management.
Staff may not wish to transfer to any new arrangement	Staff may be disillusioned. They may seek alternative employment with their parent CA or elsewhere.	Explore alternative options for staff. Make new arrangements as attractive as possible. Maintain continuity of employment rights.
Country agency staff feel aggrieved	Country agency/s left with a staffing problem. Possible legal action	Seek legal advice. Encourage consultation between CA's and their staff. Ensure solution takes all these factors into account.
Danger of damaging good working relationships with CA's and other key partners	JNCC's status and reputation could be damaged	Work out a programme/strategy to ensure good working relationships with key partners are maintained through and beyond

RISK	IMPACT	COUNTERMEASURES
		FMPR implementation
Alienation of the country agencies could adversely affect their desire to adequately fund JNCC in future	Funding suffers, and work programmes would be curtailed	Fully involves CA's in all stages of implementation, and work with them to agree an annual timetable which ensures they get adequate input to CP process.
Support unit is inadequately staffed to support the new organisational framework	Staff suffer from stress. JNCC reputation suffers. Adverse audit reports	Make realistic assessment of work involved, and ensure right number and quality of staff are in post
Business as usual could be adversely affected. Risk of taking "eye off the ball" whilst change is being implemented.	In year work programmes could suffer. Reputation could be damaged	Put realistic plans in place. Maintain clear focus and division of work between new and old. In year monitoring of work programme to highlight possible slippage
Country agencies, and other key partners and players may feel that they are not sufficiently informed about the changes occurring.	Loss of continuity of services. Potential damage to relationships	Work up a communication plan to ensure all relevant parties are informed of progress and changes at appropriate times
Failure by other parties to deliver the RRA changes, including failure of government to implement own recommendations	Could delay or prevent delivery of entire project	Agree realistic timetable, and get agreement of all parties in writing, to deliver
Funding – in practice, funding does not change in line with agreed methodology	JNCC suffers, as before, by "lowest common denominator" factor . Money for new funding stream is taken from CA's budgets, ie not new money	Members and officers continue to press Defra to honour obligations.

11. Project Organisation and Infrastructure

- 11.1 The implementation programme will be managed as a project, applying good project management practice e.g. Project plan, risk analysis, quality control.
- 11.2 The following key groups have important roles within the project

Defra

- 11.3 Defra's role, amongst other things will be to help ensure, along with devolved administrations, that the longer term changes, involving primary legislation remain on the agenda. These are largely to do with issues involving Northern Ireland. Defra will also assist in the process of obtaining the Regulatory Reform Order, and will be involved in decisions which bring about the clarification and simplification of accountabilities.

JNCC FMPR sub-group

- 11.4 The Project Team anticipate that the FMPR sub-group will take on the role of project board and that this will entail takeover of many of the previous responsibilities of the FMPR Steering Group, which was made up of representatives of all the main stakeholders. That said we believe that there may strong arguments for continuing the Steering Group with a narrower and specific role for ensuring that the longer term changes requiring primary legislation do not get overlooked.

Resource Directors

- 11.5 Resource Directors act as one of the key links with country agencies, advisers to their own organisations, and a source of expertise on financial, HR and corporate governance matters to the project as a whole.

The Support Unit Project Team

- 11.6 A project team has now been formed comprising a project co-ordinator, and representatives from the business unit, finance, HR, Communications and Information Services. The team meets on a fortnightly basis and are responsible for implementation of the project.
- 11.7 The project co-ordinator, together with the project team, will co-ordinate the programme of tasks necessary to achieve successful implementation. He reports directly to the Managing Director.

The Management Team

- 11.8 The Management Team will have a key role to play in disseminating information to staff, acting as a quality assurance group, and as a signing off point for some of the products arising during implementation. They are also an important source of expertise in helping to assess how key decisions will impact on the organisation.

Quality control

- 11.9 It is essential that we build in measures to ensure the quality of any “products” is sound, whether this may include our plans, policies, new staffing arrangements, communications etc. “Products” could be signed off by an individual responsible for that piece of work, or for example, by the Management Team. Quality control of products could be carried out by individuals, or groups depending on the particular circumstances. The Project team is in the process of producing a paper showing who will be responsible for quality assuring specific products. As requested by the sub-group, we will also explore the suggestion of identifying an independent or detached source of scrutiny, to help ensure that project delivery is sound.

12. Plan

Introduction

- 12.1 The implementation is likely to be complex because of the many facets, and the number and variety of stakeholders. The Project Team will prepare detailed plans for the various components of the project, together with a summary plan to show how all the components fit together.
- 12.3 Detailed planning has been undertaken for the HR/Personnel range of tasks, and we have obtained details of the steps to be taken in making a Regulatory Reform Order. The two sections of work are going to be the critical areas of work, around which, we believe the other tasks can be accommodated.

Timescales

- 12.4 Our experience shows that planning and implementing change always takes longer than first estimates, especially taking into account the staff resources available to undertake the detailed work.
- 12.5 One of the key questions for consideration is the extent to which any of the changes need to be made at certain specific points in business calendar, for example, coinciding with the start of a new financial year. Some of the system changes and accounting may well fall into this category. There are several arguments weighing in favour of an April commencement date, not least

because of the extra work arising from a mid-year date (for example, the preparation of two sets of final accounts)

- 12.6 A separate paper which discusses the start date options has been prepared for the Committee's consideration. The Committee needs to consider and decide upon a realistic start date, which will then enable detailed plans to be worked up

Planning tool

- 12.7 We have already started to use Microsoft Project as a tool for managing the overall plan, which can then be produced both in summary form and in greater detail, as is necessary. This should help to track progress throughout the implementation process, and provide a good overview of all aspects of the implementation. The work that has already been started in looking forward to what will be the key tasks will be drawn together into a consolidated Microsoft project plan, which can be refined and updated as we progress the implementation.

13. Summary

- 13.1 The above details and Annex 1 are intended to provide a broad overview and framework of the project, particularly the implementation phase. The information and detail in this document will need updating as the implementation progresses.

ANNEX 2 TO JNCC 03 N02**Estimated costs for implementation of FMPR recommendations (assuming start date of April 2005)**

	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	Recurring costs	Comments
Project leader	£45k	-	-	-	Assumes post terminates in March 2004
Legal advice for drawing up company articles, etc	£3k	£2k	-	-	Essential for the establishment of a company limited by guarantee
Internal audit	-	-	£20k	£20k	Internal audit services are currently provided by the country agencies
External audit	-	-	£10k	£10k	
New finance systems	£1k	£20k	£10k	£6k	Major costs in 2003/04 and 2004/05 cover scoping options & purchasing system; recurring costs are associated with system maintenance & training
Additional finance staff	-	£8k	£16k	£16k	New post at English Nature beta band
Legal advice on HR issues	£15k	£10k	£7k	£7k	Assumes that advice on staff transfer issues is paid for by country agencies
New HR systems	£1k	£25k	£10k	£6k	Major costs in 2003/04 and 2004/05 cover scoping options & purchasing system; recurring costs are associated with system maintenance & training
New payroll arrangements	-	-	£6k	£6k	
Specialist HR staff	£32k	£32k	£16k	-	Existing staff - equivalent of one additional post needed to lead HR changes (e.g. harmonisation of terms & conditions)
Other HR staff support	£20k	£20k	£16k	£16k	Services could be provided through consultancy or in-house staff

	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	Recurring costs	Comments
Welfare service & other miscellaneous HR costs	-	-	£10k	£10k	
Harmonising pay & conditions	-	-	£50-80k	£50-80k	Assumes harmonisation takes place immediately new organisation is set up
Develop new corporate identity	£10k	£20k	£10k	-	Includes costs of new stationery
T&S for staff involved in FMPR work	£8k	£8k	-	-	
TOTAL	£135k	£145k	£181-211k	£147-177k	

- Defra have indicated that costs associated with FMPR implementation must be found within JNCC's grant in aid. This will consequently have an impact on the funds available for JNCC's core work.
- Recommendations that require primary legislation to be implemented (e.g. additional independent Committee member) have not been costed.
- Salaries of the project leader and some HR staff are included; other salary costs associated with existing JNCC staff who will contribute to the FMPR implementation have not been taken into account.
- Pay progression for salaries and inflation have not been taken into account.

Marcus Yeo

25 February 2003