



**JNCC Business Plan 2015/16**  
**Priority Performance Measures & Milestones**  
**2015/16**

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# **Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) business plan for 2015/16**

## **Introduction**

This plan sets out JNCC's priorities for 2015/16 and how we will allocate resources to achieve them. It is based upon agreed levels of funding provided by the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government and the Northern Ireland Executive, and anticipated income from other sources.

In times of austerity and budgetary pressures, JNCC is an excellent model for how public bodies, and others, collaborate to deliver their shared and separate responsibilities efficiently, and to ensure that outcomes are cost-effective. The 2013 Triennial Review of JNCC concluded that "JNCC is very much valued for its record of delivering Government environmental priorities and is generally respected by its partners and customers". Since 2013 we have made excellent progress in implementing the review's recommendations, leading to tangible benefits in JNCC's ability to deliver government priorities.

We are currently reviewing our strategy to further improve the utility and reach of our work and thereby the cost-effectiveness of the organisation.

## **About JNCC**

JNCC is the public body that advises the UK Government and devolved administrations on UK-wide and international nature conservation. It was originally established under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and reconstituted by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

JNCC is led by the Joint Committee, which brings together members from the nature conservation bodies for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and independent members appointed by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs under an independent Chair. We currently have a staff of approximately 170 applied ecologists, data analysts and support staff based mostly in Peterborough and Aberdeen.

## **JNCC's strategy**

Government policy is increasingly shaped by concepts of natural capital and ecosystem services. The ecosystem services derived from the natural capital located within the UK and overseas provide a very substantial and sustained flow of income into the economy and provide immense social benefits. Economic development can only be sustained through policy directed at safeguarding this natural capital and the ecosystem services that flow from it.

Biodiversity underpins all ecosystem services and together with physical and chemical features is the foundation of natural capital. Accordingly JNCC has a crucial role to play in providing evidence and advice that take account of the social and economic benefits derived from ecosystem services whilst ensuring that an increasing focus on natural capital and ecosystem services delivers better biodiversity outcomes overall. JNCC's work assists the UK Government and devolved administrations in developing and implementing coherent domestic and international policies to achieve integrated management of natural resources.

A revised vision, mission and strategy are currently being developed that will build on our existing strengths and increasingly focus on a natural capital approach.

## How we support government

JNCC's work contributes to the achievement of the goals of the UK Government, the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government and the Northern Ireland Executive. We provide trusted, impartial advice based on robust science and evidence to the four administrations.

Nature conservation within the UK is a devolved responsibility. The devolved administrations are supported in their work by the country nature conservation bodies (Natural England, Scottish Natural Heritage, Natural Resources Wales, the Northern Ireland Environment Agency and the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside). Board members from those organisations jointly govern JNCC, along with independent members, ensuring JNCC plays a complementary role to, and works in close partnership with, the country nature conservation bodies. Devolved parliaments in the UK will acquire additional powers as a result of legislation currently being drafted. Nature conservation has been devolved for many years and we are highly valued as a UK body that works in close partnership with the country nature conservation bodies in supporting devolved priorities.

As a UK body, we help to ensure that European and international obligations are met by acting as a science-policy interface between domestic and EU/global bodies, and providing evidence-based advice to support decision-making at appropriate levels. Similarly, where requested, we provide support and advice on biodiversity issues to the governments of the UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies and to the UK Government on matters related to the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies.

JNCC also provides direct support to Defra on 'reserved' functions, including work with an international dimension and nature conservation in offshore marine waters (beyond 12 nautical miles). Direct support is provided to the Scottish Government in relation to those responsibilities for offshore waters around Scotland that have been executively devolved. We also support the work of various other Whitehall departments, including the Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC), the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), and the Department for International Development (DFID), where issues of nature conservation are involved.

### *Defra, other Whitehall departments and Natural England*

In 2015/16, JNCC will provide advice and information to Defra to support the department's responsibilities for nature conservation in England, the UK and internationally. In particular, we will contribute to Defra's objective to achieve a cleaner, healthier environment which benefits people and the economy.

JNCC's current priorities for Defra are summarised below.

- JNCC will continue to support the delivery of UK-level biodiversity datasets through partnerships with the Biological Records Centre, the British Trust for Ornithology and others, and will continue to develop systems, standards and tools to support access and sharing of biological records (e.g. through the National Biodiversity Network).
- JNCC will continue to support the programme of work for establishing a UK contribution to an ecologically coherent network of marine protected areas in the north-east Atlantic. We will provide scientific advice to support Defra in designating Marine Conservation Zones in offshore waters and provide advice on the identification of possible Special Areas of Conservation for harbour porpoise and marine Special Protection Areas.

- JNCC will place high priority on developing options and advice for monitoring different components of marine biodiversity to meet obligations under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and other legislation.
- JNCC will work closely with Defra and its agencies and public bodies to achieve environmental priorities in a collaborative manner.

JNCC will also support relevant priorities of other Whitehall departments, in particular DECC, FCO and DFID.

Support for Natural England will be focused on providing evidence and advice to help them to achieve the following objectives in their corporate plan for 2015/16.

#### Terrestrial biodiversity

- Drive with partners the implementation of the actions from the Biodiversity2020 delivery review for priority habitats, protected sites, species and ecosystem outcomes.
- Maintain a suite of internationally and nationally protected sites and hence contributing towards the creation of a coherent and sustainable ecological network

#### Marine biodiversity

- Deliver post-consultation advice to Defra on the designation of tranche 2 Marine Conservation Zones and initial advice on tranche 3.
- Advise Defra on classification of new marine Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation.
- Continue to invest in the evidence base through data collection, monitoring and research to inform the designation, condition and management of Marine Protected Areas and wider marine biodiversity and implement a new condition assessment process.

#### Evidence

- Deliver a high quality and accessible evidence base that underpins the management and protection of England's protected sites and the wider environments and takes account of climate and other environmental changes.

#### *Scottish Government and Scottish Natural Heritage*

In 2015/16, JNCC will work with the Scottish Government and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) to enhance Scotland's natural resources and help deliver the contribution that responsible management of these resources can make to increasing sustainable economic growth throughout Scotland.

JNCC's current priorities for Scotland are summarised below.

- JNCC will continue to support Scotland's interests in the delivery of UK-level biodiversity datasets through partnerships with the Biological Records Centre, the British Trust for Ornithology and others. To the fullest extent possible, we will ensure that monitoring schemes generate results for Scotland.
- JNCC will complete and publish Phase 1 of the SPA review, and continue revision of the SSSI selection guidelines.
- We will engage with SNH on the forward programme of EU and international reporting obligations. A particular priority will be building the evidence base for Scotland under the Habitats and Birds Directives, towards reporting fully on all attributes by 2019.

- We will provide advice on the identification of possible Special Conservation Areas for harbour porpoise and technical support for consultation on marine Special Protection Areas.
- JNCC will place high priority on completing options and advice for monitoring different components of marine biodiversity to meet obligations under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and other legislation.
- Working in close collaboration with SNH, JNCC will provide advice to Marine Scotland in the Scottish offshore zone to inform decisions on wind and marine renewables in line with Scottish Government targets. We will identify and help to fill research/evidence gaps in respect of marine renewables.

### *Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales*

In 2015/16, JNCC will continue to support the work of the Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales (NRW) in their sustainable management of the land and seas of Wales through UK advice, standards and reporting. We will work closely with NRW and the Welsh Government and enhance collaboration by locating a JNCC staff member in a Welsh Government office in Wales.

JNCC's current priorities for Wales are summarised below.

- JNCC will continue to support the delivery of UK-level biodiversity datasets through partnerships with the Biological Records Centre, the British Trust for Ornithology and others, and will support NRW's preparation of an integrated and prioritised monitoring programme.
- JNCC will continue to develop systems, standards and tools to support access and sharing of biological records (e.g. through the National Biodiversity Network) and will advise Welsh Government and NRW on the development of a Welsh environmental information hub.
- JNCC will provide a view of priorities for Wales in the context of EU requirements and will support Welsh Government in developing and embedding its natural resource policy across a range of relevant policy areas, including development of the Nature Recovery Plan.
- JNCC will provide advice to Welsh Government on the production of the first statutory National Natural Resources Policy pending the successful passage of the Environment Bill in 2015.
- JNCC will provide advice to NRW on the evidence base for the sustainable management of natural resources to inform the first statutory State of Natural Resources Report.
- JNCC will provide advice to enable Welsh policies and monitoring approaches to take appropriate account of invasive non-native species.
- JNCC will continue to lead the development of BARS to facilitate the capture of biodiversity action data for improved global, EU and country level reporting.
- JNCC will support the identification of marine protected areas (MPAs) in Welsh waters by quantifying Wales' current contribution to the MPA network and informing analyses to identify any shortfalls. We will also provide technical support to improve MPA monitoring.
- JNCC will provide technical advice to support implementation of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.
- JNCC will provide technical advice and evidence to support the implementation of marine planning.

*Northern Ireland Department of the Environment, Northern Ireland Environment Agency and the Council for Nature Conservation and Countryside*

Support to the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA), the Department of Environment (DOE) including its the Marine Division, and the Council for Nature Conservation and Countryside (CNCC) in 2015/16 will be focused on helping them to achieve their highest environmental priorities as cost-effectively as possible.

### **Collaboration with Government bodies and civil society**

JNCC is inherently a mechanism for the country conservation bodies and UK and devolved Governments to collaborate in delivering shared obligations and addressing shared issues. Our collaborative approach extends much further than this. We provide advice, co-ordination and information that promote a culture of partnership working and joined-up approaches to the conservation of biodiversity with a large number of other organisations in Government and in civil society. Through this collaborative approach we help to:

- provide a highly cost-effective delivery mechanism, enabling organisations to identify and pool resources to find solutions to shared strategic issues, use technology to share assets, obtain shared services, and access additional resources;
- achieve coherence in nature conservation policy and implementation at different geographical scales and across sectors to mitigate the risk of legal challenge and streamline numerous processes such as production of UK-level assessments;
- enable the country conservation bodies and others to contribute to the developing agendas around natural capital and ecosystem services to deliver an enhanced natural environment;
- maximise returns from investments in research, monitoring and surveillance in order to provide a strong and cost-effective evidence base, including evidence on the relationships between the natural environment, society and the economy.

Examples of our approach include:

- supporting co-ordination and collaboration at a UK scale through the Joint Committee (which includes members from each of the country nature conservation bodies) and a wide range of specialist and technical groups;
- working in partnership with UK and devolved administrations and other statutory bodies to achieve shared goals in a cost-effective manner;
- enabling country bodies to share expertise and achieve economies of scale;
- supporting civil society involvement in nature conservation through partnerships with a range of non-governmental organisations (and through them leveraging the time and expertise of thousands of volunteers worth nearly £8 million per annum) to deliver surveillance schemes that provide essential information on biodiversity status and trends across the UK;
- participating in European and wider international networks dealing with scientific and technical aspects of nature conservation to share experiences, learn from good practice outside the UK, and build partnerships;
- discussing technical issues with bodies in neighbouring Member States to ensure a joined-up approach across borders.

### **Key considerations informing the business plan for 2015/16**

Priorities for 2015/16 have been identified through consultation with Defra and other Whitehall departments, the devolved administrations, the country nature conservation bodies and others. This business plan sets out the work JNCC will undertake to support UK

Government and devolved administrations in meeting their national and international obligations in 2015/16.

The work programme described in this business plan has been drawn up to ensure that effort is focused on the highest priorities and to make the best use of available resources. We have aimed to meet statutory requirements and support individual country priorities within a framework of UK standards and co-ordination.

We will continue to be flexible and responsive to changes to policies relating to nature conservation and the associated institutional landscape in different parts of the UK, and will adjust work programmes as necessary in consultation with government sponsors.

### **Performance measures**

In 2015/16, our performance will be measured primarily in terms of delivering outputs of advice, information and services, described in terms of 14 priority performance measures that are set out below. Milestones for each of the priority performance measures are contained in Annex 2. The milestones will be used to assess performance during 2015/16.

### **Biodiversity evidence**

Biodiversity surveillance and monitoring are at the core of JNCC's purpose. The focus is on providing cost-effective evidence to meet multiple needs at various geographical scales. This work supports the implementation of devolved environment/biodiversity strategies and enables UK-wide and international reporting requirements to be met. Accessible biodiversity evidence is also crucial for planners, developers and regulators.

Key JNCC activities in the terrestrial environment include long-established partnerships with non-governmental organisations and others to undertake UK-wide species surveillance (including birds, mammals, butterflies and other invertebrates). These partnerships will continue in 2015/16, with the addition of a new UK-wide National Plant Monitoring Scheme. We will also step up our work on the application of remote-sensed data and development of habitat mapping approaches.

A long-term aim of JNCC's marine programmes is to develop a focus on determining the effectiveness of measures for achieving conservation across the whole marine environment. This can be expressed in various ways, for example as Favourable Conservation Status in terms of the Habitats Directive and Good Environmental Status in terms of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive. In 2015/16 we will continue to develop and apply approaches to monitoring marine biodiversity, within protected areas and in the wider environment. We will continue to update benthic habitat maps and associated pressure datasets.

#### *Priority Performance Measures*

- 1.1 Provide updated information on status and trends of terrestrial biodiversity across the UK
- 1.2 Collate and provide access to biodiversity data and products derived from them
- 1.3 Collect data on marine biodiversity, and undertake research and development to improve the quality and efficiency of marine monitoring
- 1.4 Publish marine evidence products, including standards, and undertake strategic work to support continued efficient delivery of these products

## 1.5 Work with partners to identify strategic UK evidence priorities

### **Shared UK approaches to nature conservation**

JNCC has a unique role in undertaking UK co-ordination and standard setting to enable effective implementation of devolved and UK environmental objectives, with appropriate links to EU and international commitments. The UK Biodiversity Framework sets out a shared vision and priorities for UK-scale activities, in a framework jointly owned by the four countries, and identifies priority work at a UK level which will be needed to deliver the Aichi targets under the Convention on Biological Diversity and the EU Biodiversity Strategy. Through implementing the Framework, JNCC will support country priorities:

- in England, priorities are set by the *Biodiversity 2020* strategy which emphasises the need for well-functioning ecosystems and ecological networks;
- in Scotland, the *2020 Challenge for Scotland's Biodiversity* sets priorities for biodiversity with strong links to economic and social benefits;
- in Wales, the Welsh Government and Natural Resources Wales are implementing an integrated approach to managing natural resources;
- the Northern Ireland Biodiversity Strategy is currently being reviewed and will place an emphasis on natural capital and ecosystem services.

Key activities in 2015/16 will include the annual update of the UK biodiversity indicators and work to deliver marine ecosystem assessments and indicators, as required by the Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

We will maintain UK standards where these are needed by the country conservation bodies, for example working with the country bodies to revise guidelines for the selection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

#### *Priority Performance Measures*

2.1 Work with the country conservation bodies to develop and apply UK-wide principles, standards and approaches for nature conservation

2.2 Provide technical expertise on marine ecosystem assessments

### **EU and international advice**

The UK has various commitments derived from EU environmental legislation and policy and multilateral environmental agreements. JNCC provides scientific advice to ensure that implementation within the UK takes account of international and European commitments and to enable influence in international and European negotiations.

In 2015/16 JNCC will continue to support implementation within the UK of the EU nature directives. We plan to provide an enhanced role in co-ordinating UK bids for EU LIFE funding, to enable UK administrations and country conservation to get maximum value from available funds.

In the marine environment JNCC will continue to play a crucial role in advising on technical aspects of the Marine Strategy Framework Directive and supporting MSFD co-ordination within the OSPAR Convention.

At a global scale, JNCC will focus its efforts on a small number of priorities, particularly implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on International

Trade in Endangered Species and the Convention on Migratory Species. We will continue to implement the UK Overseas Territories Biodiversity Strategy.

*Priority Performance Measures*

3.1 Provide technical expertise to support UK implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy and EU environmental legislation

3.2 Provide technical advice on international biodiversity and ecosystems (including Overseas Territories)

**Identification and provision of information on marine protected areas**

In recent years, a considerable proportion of JNCC's marine effort has been directed to advising government administrations on the identification of marine protected areas (MPAs) to meet domestic, EU and international obligations. The overarching aim is to establish a contribution to an ecologically coherent and well-managed network of MPAs in the north-east Atlantic by 2016. JNCC has led work to identify sites in offshore waters, and has worked closely with the country conservation bodies to support their work in inshore waters.

Substantial progress has now been made towards completing a UK MPA network, and the various strands of work are mostly well advanced. In relation to EU obligations the focus in 2015/16 will be on completing the identification of marine Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and supporting consultation on, and designation of, Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) for harbour porpoise. In relation to domestic obligations, we will support the identification and designation of second and third tranches of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) in Defra offshore waters.

JNCC will also continue to provide advice on the MPA network as a whole to ensure the UK meets international obligations and can report effectively.

*Priority Performance Measures*

4.1 Provide technical advice on Marine Protected Area identification, designation and conservation objectives

4.2 Provide technical advice on the UK contribution to an ecologically coherent network of well-managed MPAs in the north-east Atlantic

**Supporting sustainable management of the marine environment**

As identification of marine protected areas (MPAs) in UK waters progresses and the number of designated sites increases, the emphasis is increasingly shifting to ensuring that sites are well managed. JNCC plays a lead role in advising on the management of offshore MPAs. We also provide advice on management of the wider marine environment, for example by advising on the development of marine plans and the conservation of cetaceans and other wide-ranging species.

A high priority in 2015/16 will be working with partners to develop effective fisheries management measures for MPAs in offshore waters. Advice on offshore industries (oil and gas, renewables and aggregates) will also remain a high priority. While maintaining our input to specific industry casework we will enhance our advice on strategic issues that affect the UK as a whole to facilitate casework in all countries, for example through collaborative research projects.

### *Priority Performance Measures*

5.1 Advise on oil and gas, aggregates and marine renewables casework, and provide UK coordination and science leadership

5.2 Provide technical advice to support the management of offshore MPAs

### **Organisational management and development**

Good governance and effective business processes are essential prerequisites for a well-managed organisation. These processes are already delivered efficiently in JNCC but we will continue to seek opportunities to improve them further including evaluating shared services as they mature.

A high priority will be to develop and implement JNCC's new strategy, including developing our understanding of natural capital, identifying and pursuing funding opportunities, and developing supporting strategies.

### *Priority Performance Measures*

6.1 Provide and continue to improve the cost-effectiveness of core services to UK and devolved governments and manage an evolutionary change in strategy

### **Resources**

JNCC's GIA comprises:

- i. funding provided by Defra for 'reserved' activities (work relating to territories outside Great Britain and Northern Ireland and work in support of, or on behalf of, UK Government in contributing to international, European or regional fora);
- ii. funding provided by Defra and devolved administrations for 'UK co-ordination' activities (work which applies across the UK as a whole, including UK marine waters, e.g. development of common guidelines, standards and tools and UK-level co-ordination);
- iii. funding provided by Defra for operational work in offshore waters (beyond 12 nautical miles);
- iv. funding provided by all administrations for governance and corporate services spend.

Additionally, JNCC receives funding from other sources for specific projects.

Funding for 2015/16 is shown in the table below.

<i>All figures in £k</i>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2013/14</b> (restated to correspond to re-defined funding streams)	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/2016</b>
<b>Grant-in-aid</b>				
Defra (reserved)	1,544	1,019	919	893
Defra (marine) <sup>1</sup>	4,794	2,653	2,493	2,864
UK co-ordination	4,842	4,880	4,714	4,438
Governance and corporate services	0	2,628	2,539	2,516
<b>Total grant-in-aid</b>	<b>11,180</b>	<b>11,180</b>	<b>10,665</b>	<b>10,711</b>
Other income (estimated)	970	970	879	569
<b>Total funding</b>	<b>12,150</b>	<b>12,150</b>	<b>11,544</b>	<b>11,280</b>

GIA allocations for each objective and programme in 2015/16 are shown in Annex 1.

<sup>1</sup> Defra marine GIA allocations include funds provided to Cefas under the high-level agreement with JNCC. £200k for SCANS III work has been added to the Marine GIA allocation, although this has not yet been budgeted for. An additional £100k earmarked by Defra for Harbour Porpoise work has been included in the budget.

## Annex 1. Allocation of funding to programmes in 2015/16, compared with an analysis of 2014/15 costs

- The marine GIA allocations for 2014/15 (£500k) and 2015/16 (£400k) include amounts to be provided to Cefas under the high-level agreement with JNCC.
- From 2015/16, the Marine SPAs programme has been absorbed into the Marine Evidence, European Advice and Marine Protected Areas Programme. The MPA Conservation Advice work has also been moved from the Fisheries and Marine Species Programme into the MPA Programme. The Fisheries Management work has also been moved from the Fisheries and Marine Species Programme into the MPA Programme.

All figures £k	2014/15					2015/16					
	Programme	Total GIA	UK co-ordination	Reserved	Marine	Governance and Corporate Services	Total GIA	UK co-ordination	Reserved	Marine	Governance and Corporate Services
<i>Biodiversity evidence</i>											
Surveillance and Monitoring	1,428	1,428	0	0	0	1,401	1,401	0	0	0	
Marine Monitoring	968	833	0	41	94	722	663	0	59	0	
Access to Information	890	412	33	0	445	872	395	19	10	449	
Marine Evidence	1,579	394	0	1,185	0	1,599	435	0	1,164	0	
SCANS III (not budgeted)						200			200		
<i>Shared UK approaches to nature conservation</i>											
Biodiversity Information and Advice	653	520	116	0	17	660	579	81	0	0	
Marine Ecosystem Assessment and Advice	746	400	346	0	0	525	206	320	0	0	

<i>EU and international advice</i>										
Global Advice and Overseas Territories	329	10	319	0	0	338	3	309	26	0
European Advice	194	176	18	0	0	291	243	20	28	
<i>Identification and provision of information on marine protected areas</i>										
Marine Protected Areas	523	60	19	435	9	856	114	7	735	0
Marine SPAs	222	89	0	133	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Supporting sustainable management of the marine environment</i>										
Offshore Industries Advice	423	113	0	243	67	505	197	18	276	13
Fisheries and Marine Species Advice	568	174	30	364	0	404	130	44	231	0
<i>Organisational management and development</i>										
Governance and Corporate Services	2,142	105	38	92	1,907	2,338	73	74	136	2,055
<b>Total cost</b>	<b>10,665</b>	<b>4,714</b>	<b>919</b>	<b>2,493</b>	<b>2,539</b>	<b>10,711</b>	<b>4,438</b>	<b>893</b>	<b>2,864</b>	<b>2,516</b>

## Annex 2. Priority performance measures and milestones for 2015/16

PPM	Priority Performance Measure	Milestones
<b>Biodiversity evidence</b>		
1.1	Provide updated information on status and trends of terrestrial biodiversity across the UK	<p>a) Publish UK and site-related trends for wintering wetland birds and make available through a flexible on-line system (Q4)</p> <p>b) Publish UK and country trends for breeding terrestrial bird species and determine how to improve the range of habitats and species covered (Q2)</p> <p>c) Publish UK and country trends for breeding seabird species (Q2)</p> <p>d) Publish UK and country trends for bat species by applying improved analytical techniques and provide interpretation of the trends reported (Q1)</p> <p>e) Publish UK and country trends for butterflies (Q4)</p> <p>f) Produce an indicator of priority species for the UK biodiversity indicators suite by applying innovative analytical approaches to general biological recording data developed with the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology through the Biological Records Centre (Q3)</p> <p>g) Partner CEH in the Biological Records Centre to pilot integration of biological recording with research outputs to develop crop- or area-specific pollinator indicators (Q3)</p> <p>h) Evaluate uptake and volunteer feedback from the first field season of the National Plant Monitoring Scheme, and review analytical uses and development of potential indicators (Q3)</p> <p>i) Identify critical terrestrial surveillance and monitoring evidence, the most cost-effective means for delivery, and how this relates to statutory drivers and current solutions (Q1)</p>
1.2	Collate and provide access to biodiversity data and products derived from them	<p>a) Agree with each country how to deploy habitat mapping methods to meet country evidence priorities (Q2)</p> <p>b) Contribute to the Defra network Earth Observation Centre of Excellence, and develop its function as a shared service to support the processing of remote-sensed data for the assessment of habitats and their condition (Q4)</p> <p>c) Support the National Biodiversity Network as the preferred solution for managing species data and making them available for use within the country conservation bodies (ongoing)</p> <p>d) Operationalise earlier pilots towards a more efficient geographic data strategy within JNCC and explore how</p>

PPM	Priority Performance Measure	Milestones
		this can be integrated with existing country strategies (Q4)
1.3	Collect data on marine biodiversity, and undertake research and development to improve the quality and efficiency of marine monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Conduct three integrated monitoring surveys of offshore marine protected areas, focussing on seabed habitats, and produce cruise reports (Q4)</li> <li>b) Continue coordinating collection of seabird colony monitoring data for 2015 and lead the Seabird Monitoring Programme partnership in starting the next seabird census of Britain and Ireland (Q4)</li> <li>c) With partners, develop funded proposals for 2016 surveys of small cetaceans in European Atlantic waters (SCANS III) (Q2)</li> <li>d) Develop a website portal for the marine monitoring 'toolbox' to disseminate survey and monitoring standards and protocols (Q4)</li> <li>e) Update plan for operational monitoring surveys of offshore marine protected areas, including estimation of costs, taking account of monitoring options produced through the JNCC-led R&amp;D programme (Q2)</li> <li>f) Complete reporting on 2014/15 integrated case study surveys of marine protected areas (Fladen Ground by end of Q2 and Dogger Bank by end of Q4) to enable the development of seabed habitat monitoring protocols</li> <li>g) Enhance capability in deep-water survey and make further efficiency gains in vessel use by forming a new partnership with Marine Scotland Science and building relationships with British Antarctic Survey, with a view to implementing offshore surveys in 2016/17 (Q4)</li> <li>h) Hold workshops with governments and agencies to consider options for monitoring cetaceans (Q2) and seabirds/marine birds (Q3)</li> <li>i) Complete review of monitoring options for deep seabed habitats and present to Governments and UK Marine Monitoring and Assessment Strategy partners (Q2)</li> <li>j) Establish conceptual ecological models for two broadscale marine habitats (shallow sublittoral mud and sublittoral rock) (Q3)</li> <li>k) With the country conservation bodies, develop revised advice on monitoring and assessment of habitats within marine protected areas (Q2)</li> <li>l) Publish an updated version of the high-level Marine Biodiversity Monitoring Strategy (Q2)</li> </ul>
1.4	Publish marine evidence products, including standards, and undertake strategic work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Publish updated benthic habitat maps, including EUSeaMap (Q3), and contribute to the development of UK standards for marine habitat mapping (Q4)</li> <li>b) Publish abrasion and extraction pressure datasets and their associated standards (Q3), and develop efficient</li> </ul>

PPM	Priority Performance Measure	Milestones
	to support continued efficient delivery of these products	<p>routines for creating new pressure layers (Q4)</p> <p>c) Launch a fully functional and tested noise register for the UK populated with historical data (Q4)</p> <p>d) Process offshore survey data and deliver to relevant Data Archive Centres, and develop proposals for establishing Data Archive Centres for other derived data products (e.g. habitat maps and pressure datasets) (Q4)</p> <p>e) Specify, for implementation in 2016/17, a cross-agency/JNCC project to identify improvements in the supply and use of marine data (Q3)</p> <p>f) Produce a report identifying the evidence needs for strategic conservation advice on seabirds at different scales and across different steps of the environmental management cycle (Q4)</p>
1.5	Work with partners to identify strategic UK evidence priorities	a) Contribute to the development of Defra's Network Evidence Action Plans, maintaining good links with the devolved administrations to identify UK priorities and ensure these are adequately represented (Q2)
<b>Shared UK approaches to nature conservation</b>		
2.1	Work with the country conservation bodies to develop and apply UK-wide principles, standards and approaches for nature conservation	<p>a) Publish annual update of UK biodiversity indicators (Q3)</p> <p>b) Publish revised chapters of the guidelines for the selection of biological Sites of Special Scientific Interest (including chapters for birds, lowland heathland, freshwater habitats and freshwater fish) (Q4)</p> <p>c) Submit recommendations to government for revisions of Schedule 9 (non-native species) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (Q3)</p> <p>d) Following external peer review, publish a decision framework for using national and site-based evidence to account for, and attribute, atmospheric nitrogen deposition as a threat to or cause of unfavourable habitat condition on protected sites (Q1)</p> <p>e) Submit proposals to Government on species protection measures (follow-up to the 6<sup>th</sup> Quinquennial Review of Schedules 5 and 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act) (Q4)</p> <p>f) Complete the review of terrestrial Special Protection Areas (Q4)</p> <p>g) Working with the country nature conservation bodies, provide advice on interpretation and development of Common Standards Monitoring for protected areas in light of emerging approaches and strategies for the natural environment in different parts of the UK (Q3)</p> <p>h) Develop and pilot approaches to the valuation and assessment of natural capital and ecosystem services,</p>

PPM	Priority Performance Measure	Milestones
		<p>including standards, tools, advice and models for the use of species data and habitat mapping at a variety of scales (Q4)</p> <p>i) Working with partners, build a knowledge hub on ecosystem resilience, and explore through case studies the applicability of key concepts in risk and ecosystem resilience to past pest and disease outbreaks (Q4)</p>
2.2	Provide technical expertise on marine ecosystem assessments	<p>a) Agree with Defra and other government partners a plan for coordinating and delivering the biodiversity aspects of the UK's Article 8, 9 and 10 report under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (due in 2018) (Q3)</p> <p>b) Undertake research to develop benthic habitat indicators for OSPAR and UK waters (Q4)</p> <p>c) Submit specifications and assessment sheets for common biodiversity indicators being used for OSPAR's 2017 Intermediate Assessment to the 2016 Biological Diversity Committee (Q3)</p> <p>d) Agree a plan with the country nature conservation bodies for delivering marine assessments under the Marine Strategy Framework Directive, OSPAR, Nature Directives and the Marine Acts between 2016 and 2019 (Q4)</p> <p>e) Publish outputs from phase 1 and 2 of the offshore marine protected area assessment pilot (Q4)</p> <p>f) Lead delivery of the marine components of the European Topic Centre on Inland, Coastal and Marine waters Action Plan for 2015 and development of the 2016 Action Plan (Q3)</p>
<b>EU and international advice</b>		
3.1	Provide technical expertise to support UK implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy and EU environmental legislation	<p>a) Develop a list of challenges and implications for governments and country nature conservation bodies in relation to areas of risk and opportunity under the Nature Directives (Q1)</p> <p>b) Coordinate the update of the UK Prioritised Action Framework (Q4) and lead on finalising the offshore section (Q3)</p> <p>c) Develop JNCC's role in assisting Defra, devolved administrations and country conservation bodies in coordinating UK bids for EU LIFE funding (Q2)</p> <p>d) Coordinate delivery of the updated Natura Standard Data Forms (Q3)</p> <p>e) Advise Defra and devolved administrations on important EU biodiversity issues, including the REFIT process, Habitats and Birds Directive reporting, the mid-term review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy, and the Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystem Services initiative (ongoing)</p> <p>f) Define Favourable Conservation Status, and identify next steps in improving application of the concept, ensuring links are made with the definition of Good Environmental Status under the Marine Strategy</p>

PPM	Priority Performance Measure	Milestones
		<p>Framework Directive (Q4)</p> <p>g) As the UK National Reference Centre for biodiversity, support the UK National Focal Point to engage effectively with European Environment Agency biodiversity initiatives (Q4)</p> <p>h) Provide scientific advice to Governments on biodiversity aspects of the proposed revision of the MSFD Commission Decision (Q4)</p> <p>i) Provide scientific advice to Governments to support submission of the MSFD Programme of Measures (Article 13) to the European Commission (Q3)</p>
3.2	Provide technical advice on international biodiversity and ecosystems (including Overseas Territories)	<p>a) Contribute to UK delegations to the 12<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention (Q1), the 19<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity's scientific advisory group (Q3), the 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Parties to the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement MoP6 (Q3) and the 4<sup>th</sup> plenary of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (Q4)</p> <p>b) Lead for the UK at 28<sup>th</sup> Animals Committee of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (Q1) and related working groups</p> <p>c) Provide advice, through the Darwin Expert Committee, to the 22<sup>nd</sup> round of the Darwin Initiative (and Darwin Plus) (Q4)</p> <p>d) Contribute to the delivery of the 2009 UK Overseas Territories Biodiversity Strategy by coordinating a regional technical event to share knowledge and build capacity to deal with biosecurity issues in the South Atlantic Overseas Territories (Q2)</p> <p>e) Contribute to the delivery of the 2009 UK Overseas Territories Biodiversity Strategy by delivering a regional Overseas Territories training programme to build capacity in the use of biodiversity data, data management systems and economic techniques to assess, conserve and manage natural capital in a small island context (Q4)</p> <p>f) Support implementation of the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels in the South Atlantic Overseas Territories (ongoing)</p> <p>g) Contribute to the delivery of the UK position at the OSPAR Commission Meeting (Q1) and the Biodiversity Committee (Q4) and its intersessional working groups on marine protected areas and biodiversity assessment and monitoring</p>
<b>Identification and provision of information on marine protected areas</b>		
4.1	Provide technical advice on	a) Provide formal scientific advice to Defra on a second tranche of Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) by July

PPM	Priority Performance Measure	Milestones
	Marine Protected Area identification, designation and conservation objectives	<p>2015, taking into account the results of the public consultation (Q2)</p> <p>b) Subject to the outcome of 4.1.i, publish site information centres to support the designation of new offshore MCZs and assist public authorities (Q3)</p> <p>c) Provide formal scientific advice to Defra on a third tranche of MCZs, to support preparations for a public consultation (Q3)</p> <p>d) Subject to Scottish Government approval, lead on the public consultation of potential offshore Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and provide final advice to Scottish Government on areas suitable to classify as SPAs in offshore waters around Scotland (Q3)</p> <p>e) Provide formal scientific advice packages (site brief and draft Conservation Objectives) to Defra to seek approval to consult on potential SPAs in UK offshore waters around Wales, England and Northern Ireland (Q1)</p> <p>f) Subject to Government approval, lead on the consultation of potential offshore SPAs and provide final advice to Defra on areas suitable to classify as SPAs in UK offshore waters around Wales, England and Northern Ireland (Q3)</p> <p>g) Publish non-technical summaries of seabird and waterbird survey and analyses to support country marine SPA consultations (Q2)</p> <p>h) Complete technical support for country marine SPA consultation processes that reach their post-consultation report and final advice to government stages (Q4)</p> <p>i) Deliver to Defra and devolved administrations an assessment of the sufficiency of the UK marine SPA suite (Q3)</p> <p>j) Prepare draft site boundaries, site descriptions, conservation objectives and impact assessment to support Governments in the consultation for, designation of, and submission to the European Commission of SACs for harbour porpoise (Q3)</p> <p>k) Provide a UK conservation strategy and implementation plan for harbour porpoise (Q4)</p>
4.2	Provide technical advice on the UK contribution to an ecologically coherent network of well-managed MPAs in the	<p>a) With Natural Resources Wales, jointly provide scientific advice to Welsh Government on progress towards a MPA network in Welsh waters by end of January 2016 (Q4)</p> <p>b) On behalf of UK administrations, report to OSPAR on the UK's progress towards meeting OSPAR network obligation, including progress with managing marine protected areas (Q2)</p>

PPM	Priority Performance Measure	Milestones
	north-east Atlantic	c) Compile and publish online a catalogue of UK MPAs and then provide a MPA stock-take report to the UK administrations (Q4)
<b>Supporting sustainable management of the marine environment</b>		
5.1	Advise on oil and gas, aggregates and marine renewables casework, and provide UK coordination and science leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Respond fully to 95% of requests for advice on oil and gas operations within the consultation period (ongoing)</li> <li>b) Meet all agreed deadlines for advice on aggregate licence applications and monitoring reports (ongoing)</li> <li>c) Advise Marine Scotland on the Hywind offshore wind farm (Q2)</li> <li>d) Advise on post-consent monitoring work for consented Scottish windfarms within the consultation period (ongoing)</li> <li>e) Complete a JNCC/SNH review of Scottish marine renewable energy casework roles (including consultation with stakeholders) and present options/recommendations to Joint Committee (Q4)</li> <li>f) Complete a review of Natural England-JNCC post-delegation working arrangements for marine renewable energy casework (Q2)</li> <li>g) Respond to the consultation on the English South Inshore and Offshore Marine Plans (Q2)</li> <li>h) Subject to the consultation schedule, respond to the consultation on the draft Welsh National Marine Plan (Q4)</li> <li>i) In consultation with the country nature conservation bodies, develop a suite of collaborative research projects that address high priority offshore industries issues (Q1)</li> <li>j) Deliver a stakeholder workshop on impacts of displacement from offshore wind farms on seabird populations (Q1)</li> <li>k) Review the JNCC seismic, explosive and pile-driving guidelines, and identify changes required to update and improve them (Q3)</li> </ul>
5.2	Provide technical advice to support the management of offshore MPAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Provide Fisheries Options Papers to Defra and Marine Scotland for SACs and designated national marine protected areas in offshore waters (Q2)</li> <li>b) Complete technical evaluation of draft fisheries management proposals and provide advice to Defra and Marine Scotland on the risks to achievement of the sites' Conservation Objectives (Q4)</li> <li>c) Provide site information to enable Defra and Marine Scotland to draft formal applications to the European Commission for fisheries management measures for offshore SACs (Q3)</li> </ul>

PPM	Priority Performance Measure	Milestones
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d) Provide site information to enable Defra and Marine Scotland to draft formal applications to the European Commission for fisheries management measures for designated national marine protected areas in offshore waters (Q4)</li> <li>e) Publish generic advice on the JNCC website to fulfil our legal obligation towards public authorities for designated offshore MPAs (Q1)</li> <li>f) Publish site-specific conservation advice through site information centres for priority sites in offshore waters (Q4)</li> </ul>
<b>Organisational management and development</b>		
6.1	Provide and continue to improve the cost-effectiveness of core services to UK and devolved governments and manage an evolutionary change in strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Complete restructuring to align senior management and staff capacity with upcoming challenges and opportunities and increase integration of marine and terrestrial work (Q4)</li> <li>b) Develop strategies necessary to deliver functions and business objectives set out in JNCC's new corporate strategy. including stakeholder engagement, business development and funding, and HR development (Q4)</li> <li>c) Deliver a revised version of the JNCC website to reflect and promote the refreshed strategy of the organisation (Q4)</li> </ul>