



**JOINT NATURE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE**

**THE ROLE OF JNCC IN UK BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN (BAP)  
IMPLEMENTATION, REPORTING AND RESEARCH CO-ORDINATION**

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### THE ROLE OF JNCC IN UK BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN (BAP) IMPLEMENTATION, REPORTING AND RESEARCH CO-ORDINATION

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#### 1. Introduction

1.1 In March 2005, the Joint Committee considered its objectives for the imminent review of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP). The JNCC role at that time gave priority to responding to international obligations, information provision/management and a degree of communication and coordination. Updates on progress were presented to Committee in March 2006 and March 2008.

1.2 One of the landmark achievements of the UK BAP review was the publication of *Conserving Biodiversity – the UK Approach* in October 2007. This statement was made on behalf of all four countries in the UK and described the strategic framework under which devolved implementation of country strategies would contribute to meeting shared challenges, common goals and international commitments. *The UK Approach* encompasses all activities which meet UK commitments under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and therefore covers the full range of domestic biodiversity work, including protected areas, marine biodiversity, non-native species, and climate change adaptation. It includes a summary of UK responsibilities (see Annex 1).

#### 2. Structure for implementation and governance under the UK strategic framework

2.1 Countries are currently developing infrastructures to implement their strategies under the UK strategic framework outlined in *Conserving Biodiversity – the UK Approach*, hereafter referred to as the UK strategic framework. So, it is timely to also consider delivery of the UK responsibilities, and, in particular, the role played by JNCC. Clarity of the role played by JNCC will help to increase understanding of the new approach to BAP implementation, manage some of the expectations that have arisen during the review process, and rebuild confidence in the partnership more widely.

2.2 In addition to JNCC and the UK Biodiversity Secretariat in Defra, there are several groups established under the umbrella of the UK Biodiversity Partnership Standing Committee (UKBPSC) to guide and undertake delivery of the UK responsibilities. Some of these groups, such as the Biodiversity Reporting and Information Group (BRIG) and the Biodiversity Research Advisory Group (BRAG), are longstanding groups with refreshed terms of reference and work plans, while others are relatively new groups such as the

UK Biodiversity Indicators Steering Group (UKBISG) and the Terrestrial and Freshwater Biodiversity Surveillance Strategy Implementation Group (TFBSSIG). JNCC plays a leading role in these groups, variously providing chairs and secretariat support, and contributing significant intellectual input.

2.3 Figure 1 illustrates the structure of implementation and governance under the UK strategic framework. Although the country structures are most prominent with regard to implementation, emphasis is given to the UK components within the figure, to assist in helping to define the JNCC role.

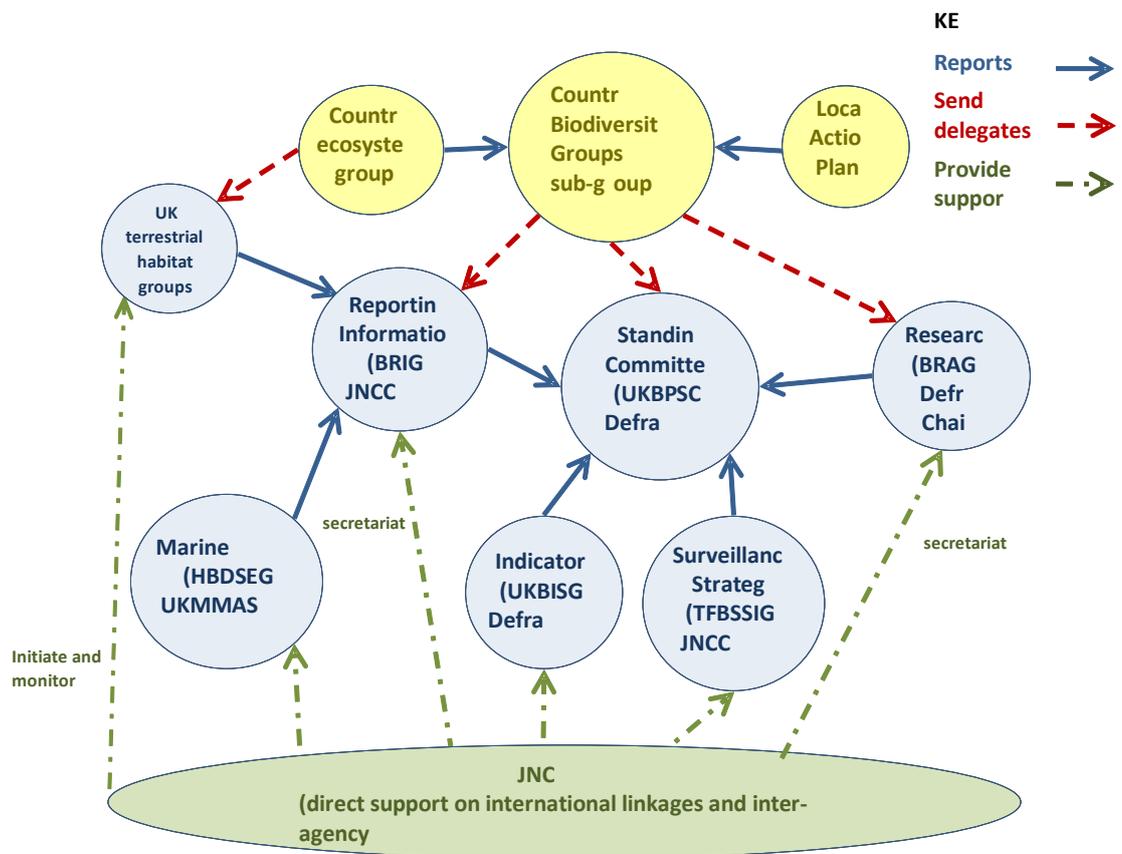


Figure 1. UK BAP structure

### 3. JNCC role in relation to UK BAP implementation, reporting and research co-ordination

3.1 The table in Annex 1 lists the UK responsibilities agreed in *Conserving Biodiversity - the UK Approach* and summarises the JNCC role for each. JNCC provides leadership through its roles in chairing groups, providing

secretariat functions and through significant intellectual input to research coordination, indicator development and marine issues. JNCC supports the development of information systems underpinning BAP implementation and reporting. JNCC also coordinates related work being undertaken within the four countries which is delivering UK responsibilities.

- 3.2 The table in Annex 1 only shows JNCC roles. We recommend that the table is extended, in consultation with Defra, the devolved administrations, the country conservation bodies and Wildlife and Countryside Link, to clarify the respective roles of the other BAP partners in delivering UK responsibilities.

#### **4. Conclusion on JNCC role**

- 4.1 JNCC makes a significant contribution to implementation of the UK strategic framework through:

- i. providing intellectual leadership and co-ordination of work on UK vision, reporting, information, surveillance, research priorities and science-policy interface as part of the overarching approach;
- ii. providing secretarial, technical and analytical support for UK-level groups (BRIG, BRAG, UKBISG, TFBSSIG and some marine groups);
- iii. providing advice, technical analysis and co-ordination on UK protected area networks and sustainable use;
- iv. influencing development of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), EU Biodiversity Strategy and other global and European biodiversity agreements and providing feedback;
- v. promoting synergy, integration and efficiency between implementation and reporting of CBD and other international commitments;
- vi. ensuring that there are sufficient guidance and standards to meet requirements for UK overview and reporting;
- vii. undertaking UK overviews and reporting as required (eg Fourth National Report to CBD);
- viii. providing intellectual leadership and technical support for information gathering and data access to meet requirements that are agreed to be more effectively or efficiently addressed at a UK scale, including the National Biodiversity Network and Biodiversity Action Reporting System;
- ix. hosting and management of the UK BAP website.

- 4.2 The JNCC role fits within the new JNCC mission to ‘provide evidence and advice to assist the UK government and devolved administrations in developing and implementing coherent domestic and international policies on

the protection of natural resources as an integral part of sustainable development'. The work undertaken by JNCC to support UK BAP is widely distributed across science, policy and marine programmes within JNCC, but is not always identified as a specific contribution to UK BAP. An element of the work involves coordination of work between the country conservation bodies and other partners and the promotion of common standards for target setting and reporting. The priority for work on common standards is considered in the separate paper to this Committee meeting on 'Review of UK-wide Conservation Standards'.

**Annex 1. UK responsibilities under the UK strategic framework published in *Conserving Biodiversity – the UK Approach*, with JNCC delivery roles and relevant KPIs for each responsibility**

UK responsibility	JNCC role	Relevant JNCC key performance indicators for 2009/10 (abbreviated)
<b>ADVICE AND COORDINATION</b>		
UK vision and overarching approach, including co-ordinated UK implementation of/response to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution to UK vision and overarching approach</li> <li>• Influencing MEAs, providing evidence of best practice, communicating outcomes and supporting development of UK responses</li> <li>• Includes similar work on EU Biodiversity Strategy and EU Directives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MEA stakeholder feedback event</li> <li>• Preparation for the 10<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (including input to revision of Strategic Plan and post-2010 targets)</li> <li>• Provide intelligence on priority EU policy areas</li> </ul>
Maintaining and updating the UK list of priority species and habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinating periodic reviews</li> <li>• Maintaining data on conservation status as a contribution to the Biodiversity Reporting and Information Group (BRIG)</li> </ul>	
UK strategy for surveillance and monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalisation of strategy and implementation</li> <li>• Lead on marine surveillance strategy (through UK Marine Monitoring and Assessment Strategy, Healthy and Biologically Diverse Seas Evidence Group, etc)</li> <li>• Some implementation (UK-wide schemes such as bird monitoring and offshore marine etc)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marine monitoring strategy</li> <li>• Establish Terrestrial and Freshwater Biodiversity Surveillance Strategy Implementation Group (TFBSSIG)</li> </ul>
Guidance/standards for sustainable use of ecosystems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying requirements</li> <li>• Coordinating activities</li> <li>• Collating best practice</li> <li>• Technical advice</li> <li>• Influencing international negotiations</li> <li>• Advice on ecosystem assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technical input to UK National Ecosystem Assessment, European Ecosystem Assessment (EURECA) and Millennium Ecosystem Assessment follow-up</li> <li>• Advice on The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB)</li> <li>• Influencing strategy for the EU Common Fisheries Policy</li> <li>• Advice on sustainable use of UK seas</li> <li>• Data on human use of the marine environment</li> <li>• Annual report on UK global biodiversity impacts</li> </ul>
Guidance/standards for a coherent network of protected areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of guidance on selection of UK protected areas</li> <li>• Promoting joined-up approach to international commitments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice on offshore marine protected areas</li> <li>• Recommend offshore Special Protection Areas (SPAs)</li> <li>• Review of terrestrial SPAs</li> <li>• Establish requirements for review of SSSI guidelines</li> </ul>
Signposting of actions to appropriate geographic scales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination and overview delivered through BRIG</li> </ul>	

Communication across all four countries and partnership conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate work led by JNCC, BRIG, BRAG, GBSC TFBSSIG and marine groups</li> <li>• Feedback from MEAs and EU</li> <li>• Technical advice and support</li> <li>• Maintain UK BAP website</li> </ul>	
<b>INFORMATION EXCHANGE</b>		
NBN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for NBN Trust</li> <li>• Technical delivery</li> <li>• Contributing data</li> <li>• Advice on application within policy</li> <li>• Influencing international information programmes, e.g. INSPIRE and the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removing barriers to data access</li> </ul>
<b>SCIENCE-POLICY INTERFACE</b>		
UK strategy for biodiversity research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of research priorities and influence on research investments in UK and Europe</li> <li>• Support and secretariat for the Biodiversity Research Advisory Group (BRAG) and the Global Biodiversity Sub-Committee (GBSC) of the Global Environmental Change Committee</li> <li>• Relationships with research funding programmes and organisations (Natural Environment Research Council, Living with Environmental Change, Rural Economy and Land Use programme, Environment Research Funders' Forum etc)</li> <li>• International co-operation through FP7, European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy, Biodiversa</li> <li>• Influencing development of the science-policy interface in UK, Europe and globally (e.g. Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying research needs and influencing research funding</li> <li>• Contribute to establishment of a more effective international science-policy interface</li> </ul>
<b>ASPECTS OF REPORTING</b>		
Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for UK Biodiversity Indicators Steering Group</li> <li>• Production of <i>Biodiversity Indicators in your Pocket</i></li> <li>• Influencing and UK co-ordination with international initiatives (Streamlining European 2010 Biodiversity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update and publication of <i>Biodiversity Indicators in your Pocket</i></li> <li>• European Topic Centre work to support indicator production</li> </ul>

	Indicators, OSPAR, Convention on Biological Diversity)	
MEAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collation and drafting of UK reports</li> <li>• Technical advice (harmonisation, strategy, joined up responses to obligations, etc)</li> <li>• International liaison</li> </ul>	
European Directives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collation and drafting of UK reports</li> <li>• Technical advice to Defra</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European Topic Centre work on harmonising reporting obligations</li> </ul>
UK Biodiversity Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for BRIG and UK Habitat Groups in ensuring sufficient UK coherence to meet UK-level obligations for reporting and assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice on reporting outcome of biodiversity actions</li> </ul>
BARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery under contract</li> <li>• Technical advice</li> </ul>	