

UNITED KINGDOM / ROYAUME-UNI / REINO UNIDO

Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

**Seventh Meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
15 – 28 September 2002, Bonn, Germany.**

Report of the **UNITED KINGDOM** Government
pursuant to Article VI, paragraph 3 of the Convention

**FOREWORD BY THE RT. HON. MICHAEL MEACHER MP, MINISTER OF STATE
(ENVIRONMENT)**

**UK NATIONAL REPORT TO THE CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY
SPECIES OF WILD ANIMALS (CMS)**

It is now thirty years since the Stockholm Conference on "Man and the Environment" recognised the need for an international instrument dedicated to the conservation of the world's migratory species. It was this Conference which provided the impetus for the negotiation of the Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals. The countries that have been involved in the development of the Convention since its inception have seen it grow steadily and acquire considerable experience in promoting practical conservation measures through international cooperation. CMS is now a firmly established player on the world's conservation stage and an important member of the UNEP family.

The United Kingdom is pleased to have been able to play an active role in the development and implementation of the Convention. In the past, UK officials have chaired both the Standing Committee and the working sessions of the Conference of the Parties, while the UK's representative is the current Chairman of the Scientific Council. We act as depositary to the Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats (Eurobats), having also provided its interim secretariat in the early days. It is encouraging to see how well that Agreement has developed in terms of membership, activities and reputation over the past ten years. I hope that other CMS initiatives can match Eurobats' success.

This report highlights the breadth and depth of the United Kingdom's efforts over the past three years to continue to implement the Convention and its associated Agreements. You will see that our interests are not confined to Europe, since some of our overseas territories lie within the range of initiatives in other parts of the world. Since the last COP, the UK has signed the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP) and the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the Indian Ocean and South East Asia.

CMS is an outward looking Convention. While consolidating its position in Europe and Africa, it also made significant inroads in other parts of the world, recruiting new Parties to the Convention itself and drawing in non-Parties as participants in its worldwide activities. Considerable effort has also been made in forging links with other organisations – other conventions, national authorities and NGOs alike – to pool expertise and to work together for mutual benefit. As a result of this bridge building, for example, the Convention on Biological Diversity now recognises CMS as its lead partner in the conservation and sustainable use of migratory species.

The species covered by CMS face particular threats, both environmental and political, as a direct result of their migratory behaviour. They depend throughout their migration cycle on a series of often fragile habitats and their journeys take no account of the international boundaries that they cross. This means that their continued existence may depend on every single range state being committed to ensuring that the conditions required for the species' survival are maintained. It is CMS which provides a forum where we all can discuss and learn how best to meet our common responsibilities for our shared natural heritage.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Meacher". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Contents

I. General information	5
II. Measures taken to implement decisions of the Sixth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties	5
Concerning species added to Appendix I and Appendix II	5
Atlantic Sturgeon	5
Steps taken to develop and conclude agreements under Article IV (3) and under Article IV (4)	6
Albatross and Petrel Agreement	6
Actions taken to implement other resolutions of the Conference of the Parties	6
Bycatch	6
III. Other changes with respect to the implementation of the Convention	8
Changes in legislation	8
Water Framework Directive	8
Countryside and Rights of Way Act	8
The Nature of Scotland	9
Northern Ireland	9
Concerning species listed in Appendix I	9
Measures which have been taken in accordance with Article III (4) since the last report	9
White-headed Duck	9
Aquatic Warbler	10
White Tailed Sea Eagle	11
Exceptions made with respect to Article III (5) since the last report	11
Exploitation of Marine Turtles in UK's Overseas Territories	11
Derogations	11
Concerning species listed in Appendix II	12
Membership in agreements: Articles IV (3) and IV (4)	12
Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats	12
Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans in the Baltic and North Seas	13
African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement	14
Progress in developing and concluding new draft agreements	14
Marine Turtle Agreements	14
Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous	
Atlantic Area	15
Additional measures to conserve migratory species listed in Appendix II	15
Seals	15
Corncrake	15
Osprey	16
Dolphin Space Programme	16
Other Species Conservation Schemes	16
Estuarine and Coastal Initiatives	17
IV. National activities relating to species listed in Appendices I and II and to other migratory species (Article II (3a))	17
UK Biodiversity Action Plan	17
Species Action Plans	18
Surveys, Monitoring and Research	18
Bird Monitoring	18
Seabirds at Sea	19
Seabirds Monitoring Programme	19
Seabird 2000	20

Terrestrial Mammal Surveillance and Monitoring Network	20
Seal Monitoring	20
Marine Turtle Monitoring	21
V. Any other comments	21
Protected Site Networks	21
Special Protection Area Network Review	21
Marine Special Protection Areas	22
National Biodiversity Network	22
Conservation of Arctic Fauna and Flora	22
Climate Change	23
Non-native (or 'Alien') Species	23
VI. UK Dependent and Overseas Territories (FCO to provide)	24
Dependent Territories	24
Isle of Man	24
Jersey	25
Overseas Territories	26
Ascension Island	26
Bermuda	26
British Indian Ocean Territory	28
British Virgin Islands	29
Cayman Islands	30
Falkland Islands	31
Gibraltar	35
St. Helena	37
Tristan Da Cunha	37
VII. Abbreviations	39

I. General information

This report covers the period 2000-2002 following the guidelines adopted in Resolution 4.1 by the Conference of the Parties (CoP) at its Fourth meeting (Nairobi, 7-11 June 1994).

The designated focal point for the UK is:

Steve Lee-Bapty
Global Wildlife Division
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Temple Quay
Bristol BS1 6EB

Telephone: +44 (0)117 372 8295
Facsimile: +44 (0)117 372 8317
E-mail: steve.lee-bapty@defra.gsi.gov.uk

During the period of the report, Dr Colin A. Galbraith, of Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), was the United Kingdom's (UK) representative on the Scientific Council, and was its Chair.

The UK has attended Standing Committee meetings as an observer. The UK is Vice-Chair of the Working Group on Performance Indicators, and is also represented on the Budget Working Group.

The Scotland Act 1998, the Government of Wales Act 1998, and the Northern Ireland Act 1998 introduced schemes of devolution to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Relations with the European Union (EU) and obligations arising out of Treaties and Conventions remain the responsibility of the UK government, but the devolved administrations are responsible for implementing obligations that concern devolved matters. Powers on environmental regulation are among the policy areas devolved.

II. Measures taken to implement decisions of the Sixth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties

Concerning species added to Appendix I and Appendix II

Atlantic Sturgeon

The Atlantic sturgeon *Acipenser sturio* is a large migratory fish, found throughout most of its former range, though no longer common and is threatened. This species is sometimes found in waters around the British Isles. At present there is only one remaining European population with some thousands of individuals. Adults are rare. The causes of its decline in Europe have been a directed fishery, pollution of the lower reaches of rivers, incidental 'bycatch', damage to spawning grounds, and man-made obstacles restricting migration.

On the 27th April 2001, Fishing News reported the capture of a mature male Atlantic sturgeon by fishermen off the coast of Cornwall, near Cadgwith. As a consequence the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) issued a statement to Fishing News, along with a letter for publication in it, informing both the newspaper and its readers of the legislative protection afforded to the Atlantic sturgeon, and the penalties applicable to any offences committed.

Steps taken to develop and conclude agreements under Article IV (3) and under Article IV (4)

Albatross and Petrel Agreement

The UK participated in the successful negotiations for an agreement on the conservation of albatrosses and petrels in the Southern Hemisphere. The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) acted as scientific advisor to the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR, now DEFRA) at the inter-governmental negotiations in Hobart, Tasmania in July 2000 and in Cape Town, South Africa in January 2001, helping in particular to develop the Action Plan and the Advisory structure for this new Agreement. The UK is working towards ratification of this Agreement. The Agreement will provide an opportunity to tackle particular threats to albatross and petrel populations such as those associated with the UK Overseas Territories in Antarctica and the South Atlantic (e.g. Tristan da Cunha, South Georgia and the Falkland Islands) that suffer high mortality caused by long-line fisheries in the southern oceans.

The South Georgia Government and the Foreign & Commonwealth Office continue to enforce a sustainable management regime on the longline fisheries around South Georgia. This has resulted in the third successive year of significantly decreased mortality of albatrosses and petrels. Losses are now only 5% of those five years ago, when new fishing regulations to protect seabirds were introduced under the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR).

Actions taken to implement other resolutions of the Conference of the Parties

Bycatch

The UK recognises the importance of the issues surrounding bycatch from conservation and other perspectives. Work has been undertaken to identify and publicise the scale of the problem and positive measures to address the issues are currently being developed.

Starting in 1990, DETR has funded the collection of information on all stranded cetaceans on the UK shoreline, and the post mortem of any specimens that could be secured. The DETR-funded scheme, which is carried out by the Natural History Museum, the Institute of Zoology in London and the Scottish Agricultural College in Inverness, has enabled veterinarians to identify cause of death in stranded animals. In 2001, 528 strandings were recorded in the UK. Of these, 185 were subject to post mortem. Bycatch was identified as the cause of death in 21% of cases. As expected, bycatch as a cause of death was more prevalent in the South-west of the UK, and had a distinctly seasonal aspect, with most bycatch deaths occurring in the winter. Post Mortem analysis demonstrated that of those cases identified as being the result of bycatch, 59% accounted for common dolphins *Delphinus delphis*, 27% for striped dolphins *Stenella coeruleoalba* and 14% for harbour porpoises *Phocoena phocoena*.

Efforts to monitor cetacean bycatch continue with funding from DEFRA. To date a wide range of gill and tangle net fisheries have been sampled, targeting at least 12 different fish species, as well as pelagic trawl fisheries for herring, mackerel and bass. Observations by SMRU during 2000 and 2001 were as follows:

Target species	No. of dolphins	No. of hauls	No. of days at sea
Anchovy	0	3	3
Blue whiting	0	4	8
Herring	0	42	33
Mackerel	0	27	64
Pilchard	0	8	6
Sprats	0	10	10
Bass	53	116	71

The use of any fishing net in areas frequented by cetaceans or marine turtles, carries with it a risk of entanglement and bycatch of those species. In most cases such entanglement is fatal. In addition, turtles may get caught in hook-and-line fisheries as well as in creel ropes. Some fishing methods carry more risk than others. In UK waters, bottom-set gillnets entangle disproportionately large numbers of harbour porpoises, while drift and pelagic trawl nets pose the greater threat to dolphin species and turtles.

A report by JNCC on occurrence and by-catch of turtles in UK waters was published in 2000¹. A total of 154 turtles (94% leatherback *Dermochelys coriacea*) have been caught since records began; of these, 83 were since 1980 (38% were released alive). Due to poor reporting in the past, no trend can be deduced from these figures. Post-mortems of cetaceans are carried out by the Institute of Zoology (funded by DEFRA).

'Guidelines for Minimising Acoustic Disturbance to Small Cetaceans from Seismic Surveys', produced following advice from JNCC, SMRU and others, were made mandatory for all seismic surveys as a result of changes in the Habitats Directive regulations at the beginning of 2001.

The UK has produced two further sets of guidelines aimed at minimising disturbance to cetaceans, targeted at whale-watching tour operators and members of the public who may incidentally encounter cetaceans in UK coastal waters. Both sets of guidelines were issued in March 1999 and were circulated widely to relevant organisations in the UK.

¹ Pierpoint, C. 2000. *Bycatch of Marine Turtles in UK and Irish Waters*. JNCC Report No. 310. Peterborough, JNCC.

III. Other changes with respect to the implementation of the Convention

Changes in legislation

Water Framework Directive

On the 23 October 2000 the EU Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC) was adopted. The purpose of the Directive is to prevent deterioration and protect, enhance and restore the status of aquatic ecosystems and, with regard to their water needs, terrestrial ecosystems and wetlands directly depending on the aquatic ecosystem. The implementation on the Directive will prove beneficial for all wetlands and their associated migratory species. The requirements of the Directive will be transposed into UK legislation by December 2003.

Countryside and Rights of Way Act

The nature conservation legislation in England and Wales has recently been enhanced through the passage of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000. Consultation on possible new legislation has been separately undertaken for Scotland and Northern Ireland. In England and Wales, the provisions of the new Act apply to all Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) - which are nationally important areas of biological or geological importance - and hence to all listed Ramsar sites. The provisions improve the protection and management of SSSIs. They include:

- New powers for English Nature (EN) and the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) to refuse consent for damaging activities; to develop management schemes which will help combat neglect, and to serve management notices to require positive actions. These are accompanied by new appeal procedures.
- Additional powers to enter land, and more flexible powers to purchase land compulsorily.
- A statutory duty on public bodies to further the conservation and enhancement of SSSIs, both in carrying out their operations and exercising their decision-making functions.
- A statutory footing to biodiversity through a general duty on Government to further the conservation of habitats and species of principal importance for biodiversity, and to keep under review and re-publish any revised list of species and habitats, published by the appropriate conservation body (EN and CCW).
- Increases in offences and penalties for deliberate damage to SSSIs, and powers to order restoration of the damaged special interest where this is practicable.

Section 74 of the Act places duties upon Ministers of the Crown, Government Departments and the National Assembly for Wales (NAW), *'in carrying out his or its functions, to have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biological diversity in accordance with the Convention'*. 'The Convention' means the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). This means that all Ministers, Departments, etc, must have due regard for nature conservation objectives; so these are, in effect, integrated with other management issues.

The Nature of Scotland

The Scottish Executive (SE) policy statement '*The Nature of Scotland*' proposed measures to increase protection and improve the management of SSSIs in Scotland, including sites which are also designated as Ramsar sites. These measures include a new power for SNH to refuse permission for damaging operations on SSSIs, improved protection from the action of third parties, reserve powers to require the carrying out of action to ensure management that maintains the conservation interest and increased fines for offences against SSSIs. No timescale has yet been set for the introduction of the legislative measures proposed in the '*Nature of Scotland*', but SE is committed to introducing legislation as soon as possible.

'*The Nature of Scotland*' also proposed increased resources to provide incentives for the positive management of SSSIs through, for example, SNH's recently introduced 'Natural Care' programme. Natural Care is a programme of measures to secure the positive management of designated sites through the use of positive management incentives. These will mainly be delivered through the use of management schemes which set out standard management requirements and offer payments in return.

Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, there has been a full public consultation on proposed new measures for the better protection and management of Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI). The review document '*Partners in Protection*' detailed the key issues and sought comment through consultation. This was followed by a further consultation on the proposals based on the feedback to the review document. The proposed measures, which have now been finalised, include refusal of consent for damaging operations or activities and management orders to address cases of neglect or mismanagement of sites. Both of these will be accompanied by an appeal mechanism. Other measures include increased fines, powers of entry to assist the survey, monitoring and management of sites, and a statutory duty on public bodies to further the conservation and enhancement of ASSIs. It is hoped that the resulting legislation will come into effect sometime in 2003.

Concerning species listed in Appendix I

Measures which have been taken in accordance with Article III (4) since the last report

White-headed Duck

Ruddy ducks *Oxyura jamaicensis* are a North American species imported into wildfowl collections in the UK. Escapees and releases from these collections have formed a free flying population that now numbers around 4,000 birds.

The white-headed duck *Oxyura leucocephala* is classified as globally threatened, with the latest estimated world population of no more than 10,000 birds. The West European population of white-headed ducks is estimated at around 2,300 birds, most of which are found in Spain. This population has grown from only 22 individuals in the 1970s due to a determined and costly conservation effort.

Ruddy ducks hybridise with the white-headed duck in Spain. This poses one of the greatest threats to the survival of the white-headed duck as a distinct species. To address this threat, the

Government commenced a limited control trial of ruddy ducks in 1999, which has continued during the reporting period. The main aims are to establish whether it is feasible to eradicate ruddy ducks in Britain within ten years, and to find out what the cost would be of such a larger control strategy. As of the 8th February 2002, 2,580 ruddy ducks had been culled. The control trial concluded in June 2002, and the results are currently being assessed.

Control of the feral population is, on its own, an insufficient measure to reduce the threat posed to white-headed ducks. The UK has therefore also recommended to the European Commission (EC) that:

- The ruddy duck should be listed in Annex B of the Council Regulation (EC) 338/97.
- Imports of this species should be prohibited under Article 4.6 (d) of the Regulation.
- Action should be taken under Article 9.6 of the Council Regulation (EC) 338/97 to restrict the holding and moving of the ruddy duck within the EU as a whole.
- The powers under Article 9.6 should also be used to require holders of this species to notify the Management Authority of the exact numbers in their possession, and to seek authorisation for any subsequent movements of such specimens.

Such restrictions would have prevented a consignment of captive-bred ruddy ducks from being (legally) sent from the UK to a keeper in Greece in early 2001, bringing them into the range of the eastern population of white-headed ducks.

On the 30th November 2000 the UK organised a workshop at the meeting of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention, on the control of the North American ruddy duck. The aim was to co-ordinate actions by contracting members of the Bern Convention to further implement recommendations of the white-headed duck Action Plan.

Aquatic Warbler

The aquatic warbler *Acrocephalus paludicola* is a regular autumn migrant to sites in southern Britain, particularly to wetlands along the south coast from Kent to Cornwall. It is estimated that several hundred individuals pass through Britain each year, comprising between 1% and 25% of the world population. The UK now has three aquatic warbler Special Protection Areas (SPA), following the recent designation of the Marazion Marshes in Cornwall. These SPAs provide habitat for 70% of the UK migratory population. The current status of the aquatic warbler in the UK was published in 2001². The UK has been consulted by the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) secretariat on a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the species.

In Wales, CCW has made efforts to conserve the aquatic warbler with the creation of reed-beds at Gwent Levels, Cardiff Bay, and reed-bed and wetland habitat at the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust reserve in Llanelli.

² Stroud, D.A., Chambers, D., Cook, S., Buxton, N., Fraser, B., Clement, P., Lewis, P., McLean, I., Baker, H., and Whitehead, S. (eds.) 2001. *The UK SPA network: its scope and content*. JNCC Peterborough. Three volumes.

White Tailed Sea Eagle

Since the completion of the second phase of the white tailed sea eagle *Haliaeetus albicilla* reintroduction programme in 1998, the Scottish population has relied solely on recruitment from Scottish-bred offspring. The population now consists of 23 territorial pairs. During 2001, 11 young were successfully fledged from seven breeding pairs – three of the pairs involved at least one bird from phase two of the reintroduction programme. For the first time, within the breeding population wild-bred birds outnumbered those released in the original release programme.

Exceptions made with respect to Article III (5) since the last report

Exploitation of Marine Turtles in UK's Overseas Territories

In October 2001, the DEFRA funded project Turtles in the Caribbean Overseas Territories was launched, to assess the status and exploitation of hawksbill *Eretmochelys imbricata*, green *Chelonia mydas*, leatherback *Dermochelys coriacea*, and loggerhead *Caretta caretta* turtles in Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat, and the Turks and Caicos Islands. Assessment will include fieldwork and genetic stock analysis at foraging grounds and nesting beaches, and evaluation of legal/illegal turtle harvesting.

Regulated turtle harvesting is currently allowed in the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat, and the Turks and Caicos Islands. As an example, no more than five marine turtles are taken annually around Montserrat.

Derogations

The UK Government, through JNCC, has continued to provide support to the European Commission (EC) by developing an information system to manage derogation information from Member States. The system has been developed to report derogations under both the Birds Directive (Article 9) and the Habitats Directive (Article 16). The system is available in all official EU languages and is supported by a guidance manual. The derogation information system is operational in nearly all Member States. It records information in a standard electronic template, and provides an effective and simple mechanism for the collation of derogation reporting to the EC. The system enables derogation data for birds to be compared directly with the BirdLife International and Ornithological Information System population databases (which are incorporated within the software). Standardisation of reporting has facilitated analyses in line with the provisions of the Directives.

Article 16(2) of the Habitats Directive requires Member States to submit derogation reports on implementation of Article 16(1) every two years. In fulfilment of this requirement, the UK has submitted biennial derogation reports to the Commission covering 1995–96 and 1997–98. Article 16 of the Habitats Directive sets out the conditions under which Member States may derogate from the provisions of the Directive. This is transposed by Regulation 44 (Regulation 38 in Northern Ireland). In accordance with Article 16(1) of the Directive, a derogation licence cannot be issued unless there is no satisfactory alternative and the action authorised by the licence 'will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range' (Regulation 44(3)).

Concerning species listed in Appendix II

Membership in agreements: Articles IV (3) and IV (4)

Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats

The UK hosted the third Meeting of the Parties (MoP) to the Agreement on the Conservation of European Bats (EUROBATS), in Bristol in July 2000. Representatives were present from 28 countries. The UK acted as Chair for the meeting and scientific support to DEFRA was provided by JNCC and EN. The Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) was also represented as a non-government observer to the proceedings.

The UK continued to participate in Advisory Committee meetings, providing a scientific delegation to the fifth, sixth and seventh meetings in Zagreb, Croatia in 2000, Sintra, Portugal in 2001 and Bucharest, Romania in 2002. Major decisions taken involved further implementation of the European Species Action Plans (SAP) for the pond bat *Myotis dasycneme* and the greater horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*. Progress updates were given from a number of Intersessional Working Groups on the conservation and Management Plan 2000-2003, remedial timber treatment, foraging habitats and land management, review of priority species list, migration routes, transboundary programmes and consistent monitoring methodologies.

To date, the UK has recommended 34 maternity and hibernacula areas as candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC), under the EC Habitats Directive, for Annex II bat species. These comprise 11 greater and 13 lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, six Bechstein's *Myotis bechsteinii*, and four Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus* bat cSACs. The sites, located in Southwest England and Wales, have been selected to favour those supporting the features required for species survival and to cover their geographical range. The site series is intended to contribute to securing favourable conservation, however wider measures remain vital to conserving these species.

The UK continues to promote the awareness of bats and their conservation through a number of activities including publication by the JNCC of a Habitat Management for Bats manual and leaflet to promote good habitat management practices among farmers and landowners. 2001 was designated International Year of the Bat, in part to celebrate 10 years of the EUROBATS Agreement. A number of activities occurred across the UK, co-ordinated by the BCT.

Implementation of UK SAPs continues for both the common *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and soprano *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* pipistrelles, barbastelle, Bechstein's, and greater and lesser horseshoe bats. The BCT hosted a one-day workshop on setting priorities for bat conservation in the UK and a number of focus groups have been set up to address particular issues that are relevant to all SAP species.

DEFRA and the EUROBATS Secretariat have contracted BCT to assist Romania and Moldova with implementing the European Bats Agreement. The overall aim of this project is to set up the framework for effective national implementation of the European Bats Agreement through consultation, development of an agreed national bat conservation strategy and implementation of priority actions from this strategy, particularly those for monitoring bat populations.

The UK's ratification of EUROBATS was extended to the Bailiwick of Jersey in 2001.

Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans in the Baltic and North Seas

The UK signed the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans in the Baltic and North Seas (ASCOBANS) on 16 April 1992 and ratified it on 13 July 1993. The Secretariat for the Agreement, which came into force on 29 March 1994, was based at the Sea Mammal Research Unit (SMRU) in Cambridge, UK until 1998. The JNCC and the country agencies contribute to this Agreement through providing advice and baseline data to Government and through establishing initiatives under the Agreement to conserve cetaceans.

DEFRA continues to act as the UK co-ordinating authority for ASCOBANS. It regularly hosts meetings with other government departments, statutory agencies, and non-government organisations (NGO), to assess the UK's continued compliance with the Agreement's obligations.

ASCOBANS is now being applied in all UK waters, including those outside the boundaries of the Agreement, in accordance with existing statutory protection for cetacean species. Discussions have been held with the Irish Government into the possibility of extending the Agreement to cover the Irish Sea and other western waters. Under ASCOBANS, signatory countries are required to co-operate in research and management measures to conserve small cetaceans in the Baltic and North Seas. Particular attention is being given in the UK to the problem of cetaceans by-caught in fishing nets and to minimising disturbance to cetaceans as a result of seismic exploration activity, cetacean-watching and leisure activities.

The UK hosted the third MoP to ASCOBANS at Bristol, in July 2000. One of the major issues raised during this meeting was the need to develop further advice on measures to prevent the incidental 'by-catch' of small cetaceans by fisheries. The JNCC chaired the seventh, eighth and ninth Meetings of the Advisory Committee at Bruges, Belgium (2000), Nymindagab, Denmark (2001), and Hindås, Sweden (2002) respectively.

A resolution of the third MoP to ASCOBANS called for an abundance survey to be planned for the ASCOBANS and adjacent water areas before MoP4. A further resolution highlighted a need for more information on the operation of seismic surveys in the areas in which populations of cetaceans covered by the agreement occur. At the ninth meeting of the Advisory Committee it was agreed that 'seed' money should be provided to enable such projects to commence.

Recognising that such 'seed' money was required, in 2002 DEFRA provided voluntary contributions of £50,000 for the provision of funds for work on an abundance survey of small cetaceans, and £10,000 for the establishment of a contract to undertake a survey of seismic activities in the ASCOBANS area.

The UK's ratification of ASCOBANS was extended to the Bailiwick of Jersey in 2001.

African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement

A separate report on the UK implementation of the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) was published in 2002.

Progress in developing and concluding new draft agreements

Marine Turtle Agreements

At the Conference on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia, held in Manila in June 2001, delegates from DEFRA and JNCC represented the UK and the British Indian Ocean Territory. A comprehensive region-wide plan was agreed, involving 105 activities aimed at reversing the decline of marine turtle populations in the Indian Ocean and South-East Asian region. Formal ratification of the MoU by the UK occurred on 27 March 2002.

The UK attended, as an observer, both the Conference on the Conservation Measures for Marine Turtles of the Atlantic Coast of Africa, held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire in May 1999, where the MoU was agreed, and the First Meeting of Signatory States to the African Marine Turtle MoU, held in Nairobi, Kenya in May 2002. The UK will consider signing this MoU if the evidence indicates that the Ascension Island turtles form part of the West African population.

During May 2001 a first meeting of the Wider Caribbean Hawksbill Turtle *Eretmochelys imbricata* Range State Dialogue was convened in Mexico City, under CITES. The meeting was attended by the UK, including representatives from five of the UK Overseas Territories. The meeting reviewed hawksbill turtle issues relating conservation programmes and recovery plans, legislation, research, and trade in turtle products. Agreements on future conservation efforts were drafted into a resolution which will be proposed for adoption at the next Range State Dialogue meeting, to be held in the Cayman Islands on 21-23 May 2002.

A three year project investigating the exploitation of marine turtles in the UK Overseas Territories is now underway, funded by DEFRA and co-ordinated by the Marine Turtle Research Group and Marine Conservation Society. The study will provide information on the current conservation status, population trends, exploitation patterns and genetics of marine turtles in these territories, as well as providing recommendations for future conservation, monitoring and management efforts.

During 2001 – 2002 findings were published on the current status of marine turtles nesting in the Cayman Islands^{3 4}.

³ Aiken, J.J., Godley, B.J., Broderick, A.C., Austin, T., Ebanks-Petrie, G., and Hays, G.G. 2001. Two hundred years after a commercial marine turtle fishery: the current status of marine turtles nesting in the Cayman Islands. *Oryx*, Vol 35, No. 2.

⁴ Aiken, J., Bell, C., Solomon, J., and Clamp, J. 2002. The reproductive status of marine turtles nesting in the Cayman Islands: work in progress. *Marine Turtle Newsletter*, No. 95.

Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area

The UK attended the first MoP to the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS) as observers. JNCC provided scientific support to DEFRA at the meeting which took place from 28 February to 2 March 2002. Pending further consideration of the action required to ratify the Agreement, a voluntary contribution of €10,000 was made.

Additional measures to conserve migratory species listed in Appendix II

Seals

SMRU continues to survey both common *Phoca vitulina* and grey *Halichoerus grypus* seals on an annual or biennial basis on most coasts of the UK. Since these surveys are mostly conducted from the air, a number of sea and land-based surveys have also occurred, with support from the statutory conservation agencies, in areas where seals breed in caves. The results have been used to identify cSACs under the EC Habitats Directive. To date, 10 common and 11 grey seal cSACs have been submitted, in locations around the British Isles, ranging from the Shetland Islands in Scotland, to Devon and Cornwall in the Southwest of England.

Fish-eating Birds

UK government departments funded an extensive research programme into the status of fish-eating birds (cormorant *Phalacrocorax c. carbo*, grey heron *Ardea cinerea*, goosander *Mergus merganser*, and red-breasted merganser *Mergus serrator*), their movements, and their interactions with fisheries. The first stage, a review of the issues surrounding fish-eating birds, was published in 1996⁵. The results were published in 1999⁷.

Corncrake

Since the launch of the management scheme for conserving the corncrake *Crex crex* on SPAs in 1997, nine sites have been designated by SE and SNH, within which payments for 'corncrake friendly' management practices have been made. During 2001, £44,000 was paid to 126 participants. In addition, continuation of the joint Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), SNH, and Scottish Crofting Foundation Corncrake Initiative saw payments being offered to crofters and farmers not covered by the SNH corncrake management scheme. Under this initiative, £22,000 was paid to 58 participants. Schemes within the Grassland Bird Prescription (Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) and Countryside Premium) are now closed to new applicants, and ESA agreements, which last for a maximum of 10 years, are being phased out. The

⁵ Russell, I.C., Dare, P., Eaton, D.R., and Armstrong, J. 1996. *Assessment of the problem of fish-eating birds in inland fisheries in England and Wales*. Lowestoft, MAFF Directorate of Fisheries Research.

⁶ Marquiss, M., Carss, D.N., Armstrong, J.D., and Gardiner, R. 1998. *Fishing-eating birds and salmonids in Scotland: report of fish-eating birds research (1990-97)*. Edinburgh, Scottish Office Agriculture, Environment and Fisheries Department.

⁷ Wernham, C.V., Armitage, M., Holloway, S.J., Hughes, B., Hughes, R., Kershaw, M., Madden, J.R., Marchant, J.H., Peach, W.J., and Rehfisch, M.M. 1999. *Population, distribution, movements and survival of fish-eating birds in Great Britain*. London, DETR. 360 pp.

first of these agreements is set to expire in 2005. In late 2000 SE launched its new agri - environment scheme, the Scotland-wide Rural Stewardship Scheme. This scheme is intended to incorporate the best elements of existing schemes as well as introducing new incentives.

Results of the 2001 annual corncrake census gave an estimate of 640 calling males in Britain, a slight increase on the previous year, and a 34% increase on the lowest population count (1993).

Osprey

In 2001 two pairs of Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* successfully bred in England for the first time since the 19th century. One pair nested on Forestry Commission land in Cumbria, as a result of natural recolonisation from the Scottish population. The other pair nested at Rutland Water, and involved a male from the Osprey Translocation Programme. The programme was a joint partnership between Anglia Water, the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust, and the Highland Foundation for Wildlife, and involved the annual release of birds at Rutland Water, taken from nests in the Scottish Highlands between 1996-2001.

Dolphin Space Programme

In September 1999, the Dolphin Space Programme (DSP) was launched in the Moray Firth, Scotland, as a joint partnership between SNH, Scottish Wildlife and Countryside Link (now Scottish Environment Link), and the EU LIFE Programme. The programme is an innovative, co-operative approach to sustainable wildlife tourism, which aims to encourage people who go out to observe bottle-nosed dolphins *Tursiops truncatus* to 'watch how they watch' and to respect the dolphins' need for space. The complementary objectives of the DSP are to:

- Reduce the potential impact that cetacean -watching boats can have on the status, distribution or behaviour of the bottlenose dolphins.
- Encourage the long-term viability of wildlife tourism in the area.
- Ensure that dolphin-watching boats operate in harmony with other water users, including shore-based watchers.

Boat operators who join the DSP accreditation scheme have agreed to follow an approved code of conduct aimed at minimising disturbance to the dolphins. All seven wildlife cruise operators in the Moray Firth area expected to sign up to the scheme in 2002.

Other Species Conservation Schemes

As of 2001, EN's Species Recovery Programme had an annual budget of £1.2 million, providing benefits to 400 species, with recovery work identified for a further 250 species. This work benefits both migratory and non-migratory species, for example:

The stone curlew *Burhinus oediconemus* recovery project, in partnership with RSPB and DEFRA, has worked towards locating breeding birds, liaising with farmers to prevent disturbances through agricultural operations, and creating and managing nest plots. As a result, stone curlew numbers have increased from 149 pairs in 1994 to 254 pairs in 2001.

Whilst the joint EN/RSPB bittern *Botaurus stellaris* recovery project continues, an RSPB led project, Urgent Action for the Bittern in the UK, which addressed the degradation of reed bed habitat at 13 localities in England within the Natura 2000 network and associated Ramsar sites, was completed in 2000. As a result of these initiatives, the number of recorded booming bitterns increased from 11 birds in 1997, to in excess of 30 birds in 2001. Bitterns will also benefit from a joint CCW/RSPB Section 15 agreement (under the terms of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981), on grazing levels for wet grassland and reed bed planting, at Malltraeth Marsh in Anglesey.

NAW is providing a Species Challenge Fund to boost biodiversity action in Wales. This will benefit both migratory and non-migratory species. The £200,000 grant will provide up to 50% funding for projects relating to species which are a UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority. It is anticipated that a considerable proportion will provide funding for small conservation groups, and that both terrestrial and marine projects will benefit.

Estuarine and Coastal Initiatives

The Interim Report of the Review of Marine Nature Conservation Working Group was submitted to Ministers in March 2001. One of the key recommendations of the Working Group was the promotion of a pilot scheme, at the regional sea scale to examine how far the conservation management needed within the pilot area could be delivered through existing systems. The Irish Sea has been chosen as the pilot area.

The trial will investigate the manner in which nature conservation objectives, including those relating to migratory species, can be integrated into the objectives of other marine interest sectors (fisheries, oil and gas, shipping etc).

To date, the UK has submitted 571 cSACs to the European Commission under the Habitats Directive. Included within the series are estuaries, a feature listed in Annex I of the Directive, which supports the passage of migratory Annex 2 species as well as invertebrates. Management schemes are being developed to ensure that these areas are maintained and enhanced.

IV. National activities relating to species listed in Appendices I and II and to other migratory species (Article II (3a))

UK Biodiversity Action Plan

As previously reported, the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was prepared in response to the CBD and published in 1994 (DoE 1994).

A fundamental component of the UK BAP is the preparation and implementation of targeted action plans for habitats and species which are considered to be most at risk in the UK ('priority' habitats and species). The first set of plans was published in 1995, and several further volumes were added over the next four years. By 1999, 45 Habitat Action Plans (HAP) and 391 Species Action Plans (SAPs) had been published.

Each HAP and SAP contains costed targets. Typically these cover both maintenance of the existing resource and more ambitious objectives for the enhancement and re-creation of habitats and the expansion of species populations. Each plan also describes a series of actions required to achieve

these targets, covering policy and legislation, site safeguard and management, species management and protection, advisory activities, research, monitoring, communications and publicity.

Implementation of each action plan has encouraged collaboration between Government, statutory agencies and NGOs, and has proved to be a powerful catalyst for conservation in the UK.

Sustaining the variety of life: 5 years of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (DETR, 2001), which reviews progress towards implementation of HAPs and SAPs is available on the UK BAP website (www.ukbap.org.uk). Despite the short period for implementation, 54% of HAPs and SAPs show progress towards their targets. 33 priority species and 5 priority habitats are showing signs of recovery; 58 species and one habitat are thought to be stable.

The UK biodiversity process places great emphasis on the importance of a good foundation of well-managed information to set priorities and targets and to report on progress and outcome. This is being achieved through the development of information systems and survey strategies for threatened species and the establishment of inventories that provide information on the extent and location of BAP priority habitats and broad habitats.

Species Action Plans

Several of these plans relate to the conservation of migratory species. Of the species previously reported to have had SAPs prepared and published, the following have shown signs of recovery: greater horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, bittern *Botaurus stellaris*, stone curlew *Burhinus oedipnemos*, and corncrake *Crex crex*. Group SAPs have been published for baleen whales (including the blue whale *Balaenoptera musculus*, and humpback whale *Megaptera novaeangliae*), toothed whales (including the Northern bottle-nosed whale *Hyperoodon ampullatus*), and marine turtles (leatherback *Dermochelys coriacea*, loggerhead *Caretta caretta*, Kemp's ridley *Lepidochelys kempii*, green *Chelonia mydas*, and hawksbill *Eretmochelys imbricata*).

Surveys, Monitoring and Research

The outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease in domestic livestock in 2001 seriously affected monitoring programmes due to restricted access to the countryside, and a number of surveys were only partially carried out or had to be cancelled.

Bird Monitoring

The UK has a comprehensive regime for monitoring the status of migratory (and other) birds. UK bird monitoring programmes are generally operated as partnerships between government agencies (usually JNCC on behalf of government) and relevant national conservation and ornithological NGOs.

The UK Wetland Bird Survey monitors the number of non-breeding waterbirds throughout the UK and provides regular information both on national trends and at key sites. It supplies data to Wetlands International's International Waterbird Census, and works closely with a sister scheme in the Republic of Ireland to ensure common data standards apply internationally across Ireland. The main monitoring of commoner breeding birds is through the Breeding Bird Survey - an annual survey of a stratified sample of about 2,000 1 km squares. This provides population trends for bird species at various geographical scales as well as for different habitats. It is complemented by a more focussed survey of the breeding birds of waterways. Data on numbers and locations of rarer

breeding birds are collated by the Rare Breeding Birds Panel and national totals are published annually. For scarcer species, major national surveys are undertaken on a regular (usually ten yearly) interval. National atlases of breeding and wintering birds are undertaken at periodic intervals: the next is scheduled to commence in 2008.

Birds in winter have historically had less survey and monitoring attention, but a recent Winter Farmland Bird Survey is providing important insights into the use of this habitat by birds in the non-breeding season. Similarly, there have been recent surveys of the important populations of migrant waders that occur in winter on wet grasslands and other inland areas.

There remain some gaps in coverage - often the result of significant problems with survey methodologies - and work is underway to try to address these deficiencies. There is also current work seeking better to integrate to results of the various monitoring schemes (for population modelling), as well as to provide an objective means of alerting conservation bodies to significant negative trends. Data from all schemes are also used to inform a range of national and local conservation initiatives - especially monitoring the delivery of action plan targets, and the identification of networks of protected areas.

Seabirds at Sea

Standard Seabirds at Sea surveys continued in waters surrounding the UK. Data was collected on both seabirds and cetaceans, involving approximately 10 cruises. JNCC established a 'joint cetacean database' in collaboration with other specialist groups involved in recording cetacean observations, including data collected during Seabird at Sea surveys. An atlas of cetacean distribution in North-west European waters⁸, based on information from this database, is currently in preparation. Reports were also published detailing the distribution, dispersion and vulnerability of seabirds and cetaceans around the Faeroe Islands^{9 10}.

Seabirds Monitoring Programme

The Seabird Monitoring Programme monitors breeding numbers and performance of Britain and Ireland's important seabird populations. The locations and size over time of seabird colonies are held on a customised database (Seabird Colony Register) jointly owned by JNCC and the Seabird Group. Annual monitoring is carried out at selected sites around the UK^{11 12 13 14 15}.

⁸ Reid, J.B., Evans, P.G.H., and Northridge, S.P. Expect to publish in 2003. *An atlas of cetacean distribution in North-west European waters*.

⁹ Taylor, S.J., and Reid, J.B. 2001. The distribution of seabirds and cetaceans around the Faeroe Islands. JNCC Peterborough.

¹⁰ Skov, H., Upton, A.J., Reid, J.B., Webb, A., Taylor, S.J., and Durinck, J. 2002. *Dispersion and vulnerability of marine birds and cetaceans in Faroese waters*. JNCC Peterborough.

¹¹ Bull, J., Wanless, S., and Harris, M.P. 2001. *Isle of May seabird studies in 2000*. JNCC Report No. 315. JNCC, Peterborough/CEH, Banchory.

¹² Mavor, R.A., Pickerell, G., Heubeck, M., and Thompson, K.R. 2001. *Seabird numbers and breeding success in Britain and Ireland, 2000*. UK Nature Conservation, No. 25. JNCC, Peterborough.

¹³ Poole, J., and Smith, S. 2001. *Seabird monitoring on Skomer Island in 1997 and 1998*. JNCC Report No. 318. JNCC, Peterborough.

¹⁴ Shaw, D.N., Holt, C.A., Turner, S.J., and Bull, A.J. 2001. *Fair Isle seabird studies 1999*. JNCC Report No. 309. JNCC, Peterborough.

¹⁵ Swann, R.L. 2001. *Canna seabird studies 2000*. JNCC Report No. 314. JNCC, Peterborough.

Seabird 2000

The Seabird 2000 initiative, launched in 1999 and in its final stages of completion, aims to establish national population counts for all 25 seabird species breeding around the coast of Britain and Ireland. All colonies were surveyed, with the exception of black guillemots *Cephus grylle* in the Western Isles, and Atlantic puffins *Fratercula arctica* in the Farne Islands, as well as some inland colonies of gulls and skuas. The results of this work, approximating to 5000 person weeks and including a substantial amount of voluntary effort, are due for publication in 2004.

Terrestrial Mammal Surveillance and Monitoring Network

At present there is no comprehensive, standardised national monitoring of British mammals that embraces the full range of important species. Whilst a range of organisations undertake monitoring, not all mammals are included, surveys are often sporadic and the results distributed to only a limited extent.

A GB wide research contract "Design and pilot a multi-species terrestrial mammal monitoring project" was let in June 2001, to the British Trust for Ornithology and the Mammal Society. The overall aim will be to design and pilot, using a volunteer network, a winter monitoring project involving both visual recording of mammals and the recording of their signs, and is intended to form a building block for an integrated mammal-monitoring system.

The main aim of the network will be to provide population trend information on all UK resident mammal species and will report to government on a regular basis. An Interim Working Group has been convened to steer the implementation process and a number of pilot schemes have commenced, including a survey using winter sightings and signs of mammals and a survey counting mammal road kills with the intention of assessing the ability of such surveys to produce indices of abundance and changes in population size of a number of target species. It is intended that a number of other pilot schemes should be introduced over the next few years.

The UK National Bat Monitoring Programme (NBMP) entered a new phase from 2000 with the end of DEFRA funding for the pilot programme, and incorporation into the Terrestrial Mammal Surveillance and Monitoring Network. The BCT and JNCC entered into a long-term partnership, with JNCC providing core funding, to take the NBMP from a pilot programme into a fully operational surveillance programme for all 16 UK resident bat species. BCT produced a report on the first 5 years of the programme, a copy of which was sent to all European countries participating in EUROBATS. The programme has produced some useful data on population trends, and an up-to-date Distribution Atlas for all UK species was produced using bat records collected by local groups over the last 18 years.

Seal Monitoring

Monitoring of common *Phoca vitulina* and grey *Halichoerus grypus* seal populations continued during the reporting period, conducted by SMRU, with additional data from statutory agencies and NGOs. Between 1996 and 2000, 36,345 common seals were counted, approximating to a total British population of 50-60,000. Counts for the grey seal showed that in 2000 an estimated 41,000 seal pups were born, equating to a total population of 124,000¹⁶.

¹⁶ *Scientific Advice on Matters Related to the Management of Seal Populations: 2001* (SCOS 2001). NERC, Swindon. Available at www.smub.st-and.ac.uk/scos.htm

Marine Turtle Monitoring

As part of the marine turtle BAP, records were collated to produce a UK marine turtle database. The first version of the TURTLE database was launched in October 1999¹⁷, created under EN's Species Recovery Programme, with support from SNH and CCW, under a contract managed by JNCC. This database contains 712 records of marine turtle sightings, strandings and bycatch in UK and Irish waters, the majority relating to leatherback turtles *Dermochelys coriacea*, with fewer accounts of loggerhead *Caretta caretta*, kemp's ridley *Lepidochelys kempii*, hawksbill *Eretmochelys imbricata*, and green *Chelonia mydas* turtles. A subsequent marine turtle bycatch report, based on records from the TURTLE database and other additional sources, was published in 2000¹⁸ (see paragraph 14). It is intended that information from the TURTLE database will be made available through the National Biodiversity Network (NBN – see paragraph 90) in due course. The marine turtle BAP is sponsored by the Cheltenham and Gloucester bank.

V. Any other comments

Protected Site Networks

Special Protection Area Network Review

The UK has a long history of documenting and protecting nature. Sites which meet relevant qualifying criteria may be designated under domestic legislation and as a result of a series of international obligations, including the Ramsar Convention and the Birds and Habitats Directives.

JNCC has coordinated a major review of the UK network of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) under the Directive on the conservation of wild birds (Council Directive 79/409/EEC). The early phase of this work resulted in agreement (by the statutory agencies and Government Departments, following consultation with NGOs) of guidelines for the selection of terrestrial SPAs (JNCC 1999).

The guidelines have been applied to data on sites of importance for birds in the UK, in the context of species-specific conservation needs for all the Annex I or migratory bird species that regularly occur within the UK. This has led to the development of a series of species-related SPAs that comprise the most-suitable sites in the context of Article 4 of the Birds Directive. The combination of the sets of sites for single species and those with more than one feature form the UK SPA network. Many of the SPAs are estuaries or other coastal habitats, and the series thus forms an important part of the protection given by the UK to inter-tidal wetlands. The list of sites forming the majority of the UK SPA network was published by government departments in March 2000 and comments were invited from NGOs and others. The results of the review were made available to the public on the JNCC website in September 2001 and became available in hard copy in December 2001.

¹⁷ Pierpoint, C., and Penrose, R. 1999. *TURTLE: A database of marine turtle records for the United Kingdom and Eire, Version 1 (oct 1999)*. Introduction, data summary and user notes (Contractor: Marine Environmental Monitoring, Llechryd). Unpublished report to EN.

¹⁸ Pierpoint, C. 2000. *Bycatch of Marine Turtles in UK and Irish Waters*. JNCC Report No. 310. Peterborough, JNCC.

Marine Special Protection Areas

In addition to the terrestrial SPAs referred to above, the UK is reviewing the potential for creating marine SPAs. For site selection purposes marine SPAs are defined as those with no dry land at any state of the tide. Three categories of marine SPAs may be envisaged:

- a) Extensions of existing SPAs at bird colonies to encompass nearshore resting, preening and courtship areas.
- b) Regularly occurring concentrations of waterbirds in nearshore areas during the non-breeding season.
- c) Offshore concentrations of birds.

Information to define the boundaries of all marine SPAs is relatively scarce compared with terrestrial sites. However, enough information exists covering the first two categories to enable proposals to be put forward relatively soon for a number of sites. Further survey work to define areas in category (b) is underway. Category (c) is more problematical, as predictable concentrations can only be found at a large scale. For instance a large part of the north-western North Sea is known to hold internationally important concentrations of birds in the early autumn, but the precise location of these birds within this area can vary widely between years.

National Biodiversity Network

The National Biodiversity Network (NBN) is a union of like-minded organisations that are collaborating to create an information network of biodiversity data that is accessible through the Internet. By providing easy access to the information people need about wildlife, informed decisions can be made to ensure the natural environment is diverse, rich and sustainable now and for future generations.

Parts of the UK information resource are available to each stakeholder. The UK government, statutory agencies and NGOs are working together to broaden access to biodiversity data, and, through NBN (www.nbn.org.uk), plans to make information available to all stakeholders in due course. The information currently available can be accessed through www.searchnbn.net.

Conservation of Arctic Fauna and Flora

The Conservation of Arctic Fauna and Flora (CAFF) is a working group of the Arctic Council to which the UK is an observer. The UK has recently increased its links with CAFF by attending a meeting of their Management Board and by active, ongoing participation in the Circumpolar Seabird Working Group. The latter met most recently in January 2002 in Anchorage, Alaska. UK participation in CAFF is particularly relevant where we share populations of migrating Arctic birds and where we have relict Arctic species at the southern edge of their range. Where relevant and appropriate, the UK will seek to cooperate with the monitoring networks established by CAFF for species which also occur in the UK.

Climate Change

As previously reported, the UK and European Community ratified the Framework Convention on Climate Change in December 1993. In November 2000, DETR published *Climate Change – the UK Programme* (Cm 4913, 2000), which details the UK's strategy for addressing climate change issues, including those raised by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its second assessment report (1995). The third IPCC report was published in 2001, and includes assessments of the scientific basis for climate change, of impacts, adaptation and vulnerability to climate change, and of climate change mitigation. This will inform the implementation of the UK's strategy.

The UK's statutory nature conservation agencies and the JNCC are considering the implications of climate change for nature conservation in the UK. The Inter-Agency Climate Change Group, formed by these agencies, works with partner organisations to identify and address the issues of significance for nature conservation. A major research programme 'Modelling Natural Resource Responses to Climate Change' (MONARCH) was launched in August 1999 as a partnership between government agencies, and NGOs. The aim of the programme is to investigate the likely future impacts of climate change on UK species and habitats over the next 50 years. Output from the first phase of MONARCH¹⁹ is already informing the policy debate, including the need for a legislative framework that accommodates the impacts of climate change on nature conservation. Phase two of the programme began in October 2001.

Non-native (or 'Alien') Species

The UK Government has established a working group to carry out a fundamental review of UK policy on invasive non-native species. The review will evaluate the effectiveness of current statutory or non-statutory procedures for dealing with the introduction and establishment of non-native species and identify examples of current best practice within the UK and abroad. It will identify the main vectors for the introduction and spread of non-native species and will put forward costed proposals for improving measures to limit their ecological and economic impact. The review will also identify appropriate organisations to take forward any measures recommended. This work is being undertaken in line with the Guiding Principles on Invasive Alien Species approved by CoP6 of CBD.

EN is currently managing a contract being undertaken by Liverpool John Moores University to develop a database of all UK invasive non-native species. This database will cover the terrestrial, aquatic and marine environments in the UK, but will not cover species that only cause economic damage, genetically modified organisms or micro-organisms. The database available should be completed in early 2002. *An audit of alien species in Scotland*, published by SNH in 2001²⁰ provides an overview of the existence and status of a wide range of non-native species found in Scotland. A number of the UK's Overseas Territories, particularly Bermuda, Tristan da Cunha, Ascension and have developed expertise in dealing with invasive species.

An Inter-agency Translocations Working Group (JNCC, CCW, EN, SNH) has issued a consultation document 'Biological Translocations: a Conservation Policy for Britain', which includes guidance

¹⁹ Harrison, P.A., Berry, P.M., and Dawson, T.P. (eds.) 2001. *Climate Change and Nature Conservation in Britain and Ireland: Modelling natural resource responses to climate change (the MONARCH project): Summary Report*. UKCIP, Oxford.

²⁰ Welch, D., Carss, D.N., Gornall, J., Manchester, S.J., Marquiss, M., Preston, C.D., Telfer, M.G., Arnold, H., and Holbrook, J. 2001. *An audit of alien species in Scotland*. SNH Review No. 139. SNH, Edinburgh.

on conducting translocations for conservation purposes. World Conservation Union Guidelines for Re-introductions (1995) have been adopted as the basis for implementing conservation translocations in Great Britain.

VI. UK Dependent and Overseas Territories

Dependent Territories

Isle of Man

Migratory birds, seals and cetaceans are all protected under the Wildlife Act 1990. Some sites are also protected under the Manx Museum and National Trust Act 1959 and the Curraghs Acquisition Act 1963. The island is a party to the Agreement on the Conservation of Bats in Europe and the African-Eurasian Waterbirds Agreement. It has also agreed to the inclusion with the United Kingdom under the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels in anticipation that this agreement may in future be extended to cover their protection in the northern hemisphere.

The Isle of Man has enjoyed increasing numbers of hen harriers (*Circus cyaneus*) in recent years with not only good numbers of breeding birds, but two winter roosts with five year average peaks of 82 and 18 birds, including periods in the autumn with counts of well over a hundred birds. Both roosts are on government land, the larger one having the added protection of the Manx Museum and National Trust Act and the Curraghs Acquisition Act including a prohibition of shooting in the area. There is no evidence of illegal persecution.

Corncrake (*Crex crex*) were recorded breeding on the island in 1999, the first time in eleven years, and in 2000 a pair bred at the same site. The Manx Wildlife Trust manages the area under an agreement with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, with payments for corncrake-friendly management. All landowners are eligible to apply for such an agreement. In 2001 breeding was recorded at another site.

The second national level Area of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) was designated in 2000, the most important site on the island for wintering and migratory birds and a key site for terrestrial migrant birds. It includes the largest salt marsh on the island and areas of inter-tidal sand, mud and rock. The other ASSI, also a National Nature Reserve, continues to protect the island's only breeding site for little tern.

The completion of sand and gravel extraction from a quarry has left a wetland of interest to birds. The owners and interested parties have agreed to build a bird reserve and already its ornithological interest has resulted in its designation in 2001 as an Area of Special Protection for birds.

The Manx Bird Atlas is undertaking a 5-year research project to map the island's avifauna and undertakes regular studies of migration movements. Work in 2001 was held up by precautionary Foot and Mouth Disease restrictions though there were no cases on the island.

Manx National Heritage operates a bird observatory on the Calf of Man and is in the process of eradicating brown rats. Though there are still a few signs, there has been only one sighting in the last two years. This should aid the nesting seabirds. There is a warden resident throughout the summer. Through work by the Manx Bird Atlas, aided by the warden, Manx shearwaters (*Puffinus puffinus*) have once more been proven to breed on the island, with four nests found in 2000 and sixteen in 2001. This species previously bred in such numbers that young birds were harvested for oil and meat up to the 18th century, but by 1812 no breeding birds remained, when rats had become

common. Since then breeding had not been proved, though in the mid and late 20th century calling birds were noted and breeding has been suspected at a very low level.

The Manx Bat Group and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry work in close liaison with regard to bat protection issues and are regularly called on for advice. The Department and volunteers are regularly called upon to check trees and buildings prior to works and comment on development proposals. Roost lists are used to identify planning applications that could affect protected roost sites. The Department of Transport provides notice of all intended bridge works so that surveys can be made and advice given.

Bat records of the island's seven species are being mapped in a review of knowledge of the island's bats, so that future work can be aimed at under-worked areas. A few extra roost sites are still being picked up each year during survey work. The Manx Bat Group contributes to publicity of bat protection issues through walks, talks and attendance at shows. Veterinary surgeons have been provided with advice on the treatment of bat casualties, issued by the Bat Conservation Trust.

Jersey

Species protection

All wild birds are protected under the Conservation of Wildlife (Jersey) 2000 except for four species: Carrion Crow (*Corvus corone*), Magpie (*Pica pica*), Wood pigeon (*Columba palumbus*) and Starling (*Sternus vulgaris*).

All *Cetaceans*, *Pinnepedia*, *Cheloniidae* and *Dermochelidea* are also protected.

Part of the South East coast of the island was designated a Ramsar site in 2001.

Species Monitoring

Breeding birds and migrant bird species are monitored through collaboration between local naturalists (Société Jersiaise) and the Environmental Service unit of the Planning and Environment Department (ESU). The Société Jersiaise contributed to the Seabird 2000 census.

The monitoring of marine mammals is coordinated by ESU which relies on volunteer groups, including the Société Jersiaise, to provide much of the information.

Species

The following Appendix I bird species have been recorded in Jersey:

<i>Aythya nyroca</i>	Ferruginous Duck (accidental)
<i>Acrocephalus paludicola</i>	Aquatic Warbler (rare autumn migrant)

The following Appendix II species have been recorded in Jersey:

<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>	Harbour porpoise
<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	Bottle-nosed dolphin
<i>Delphinus delphis</i>	Common dolphin
<i>Gavia immer</i>	Great Northern diver (common autumn migrant, scarce winter visitor)

<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>	Red-necked grebe (rare migrant and winter visitor)
<i>Podiceps auritus</i>	Slavonian grebe (scarce spring/autumn migrant and winter visitor)
<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>	Great bittern (rare winter visitor)
<i>Ardea purpurea</i>	Purple heron (rare spring/autumn migrant)
<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	White stork (accidental – five Jersey records)
<i>Platalea leucorodia</i>	Eurasian spoonbill (rare migrant)
<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	Osprey (rare migrant)
<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>	Common quail (rare summer visitor)
<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>	Mediterranean gull (scarce migrant)
<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	Sandwich tern (common spring/autumn migrant)
<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	Common tern (common breeding species/migrant)
<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	Arctic tern (rare migrant)
<i>Chlidonias niger</i>	Black tern (rare spring visitor, mainly autumn migrant)

Overseas Territories

Ascension Island

In March 2001 FCO made available a grant of £500,000 for the restoration of sea birds to Ascension Island. The money will be used for the eradication of feral cats and planning a possible future eradication of rats. RSPB are the Project Managers. It is hoped to use the Project to train the Island's own conservation officer and update local legislation.

The island continues to be a major breeding site for green turtles and local protection is 100%. Through a collaboration between University of Wales Swansea staff (Funded by Darwin and FCO EFOT) and those at Cardiff it has been possible to investigate closely the genetics of green turtles at Ascension. Data gathered to date suggest that not only are Ascension stocks found in juvenile feeding grounds in West Africa but that they make a substantial contribution to these populations (pers comm. A. Formia, University of Cardiff). This is contrary to previous knowledge based on conventional flipper tags and satellite tracking.

Bermuda

All migratory bird species on Bermuda are afforded full protection under the provisions of the Protection of Birds Act 1975. There is no hunting and guns are for the most part banned; hence none of these species are likely to come under any threat on Bermuda.

Only one bird species listed in Appendix I of the Convention – the Bermuda petrel or cahow *Pterodroma cahow*, has a range inclusive of Bermuda. In fact, Bermuda is the only known breeding ground for the species and the population is currently estimated at 200 birds.

The ocean range of this species was formerly unknown, but recent research has revealed that the species ranges into the western edge of the Gulf Stream where at least five recent sightings (two confirmed by photographs) have been reported approximately 40 miles off Cape Hatteras, North Carolina.

The Cahow's breeding islets are protected as Nature Reserves under the provisions of the Protection of Birds Act and the breeding population is closely monitored and managed by the conservation unit of the Bermuda Parks Department. Management includes protection from rats by baiting and trapping, protection from nest-site competition with another seabird, the white-tailed

tropicbird *Phaeton lepturus* by means of a burrow exclusion device and by provision of artificially constructed nesting burrows. As a result of these management programmes, the cahow population has increased from 18 pairs at the time of rediscovery in 1951 to 55 pairs in 1998.

The following Appendix II bird species have been recorded as migrants or vagrants only, on Bermuda:

Arctic tern *Sterna paradisaea*: Transient at sea, through Bermudan waters in spring only.

Least tern *Sterna albifrons*: Transient in August - September and occasionally May - June.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*: A regular transient and winter resident in very small numbers occasionally over-summering.

Roseate tern *Sterna dougallii*: Although a breeding colony once existed on Bermuda, this species was extirpated circa 1900 and is now a rare transient in May/June and September.

All three tern species are uncommon inshore on Bermuda and remain only for brief periods.

All species of marine mammals and marine turtles are completely protected in Bermuda by the Fisheries (Protected Species) Order 1978. This order makes it an offence to capture, kill, destroy or attempt to capture, kill or destroy any protected species.

Bermuda hosts a healthy population of green turtles *Chelonia mydas* that consists of post-pelagic immature specimens with a complete absence of adults.

Under the auspices of the Bermuda Aquarium, Museum and Zoo, the Bermuda Turtle Research Project promotes the conservation of marine turtles in Bermuda and elsewhere through research and education. The scientific directors are Drs Anne and Peter Meylan. This research has included genetic studies and the tagging of over 2,000 turtles. Tag recoveries have been made in Nicaragua, Panama, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Grenada and St. Lucia. Satellite transmitter tags have been used to track the movements of turtles, including a transit to Cuba. Much of the tagging work is carried out by over 100 volunteers. Funding is made possible through the Bermuda Government in conjunction with the Caribbean Conservation Corporation, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Chevron Corporation and Eckerd College.

Hawksbill turtles *Eretmochelys imbricata* are encountered by recreational divers, while juvenile loggerhead turtles *Caretta caretta* occasionally strand on Bermuda's shores following winter storms. Leatherback turtles *Dermochelys coriacea* are occasionally seen offshore and there have been five recorded instances of stranding at Bermuda since 1967. Bermuda is a member of the Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network, and the Bermuda Aquarium, Museum and Zoo has in place a comprehensive Wildlife Rehabilitation Programme.

Humpback whales *Megaptera novaeangliae* occur regularly in Bermudan waters during the spring (March – May).

Although no formal protection mechanism is in place, the monarch butterfly *Danaus plexippus* is encouraged by plantings of milkweed *Asclepias* sp. It should be noted, however, that the monarch population at Bermuda appears unusual in that it is non-migratory being resident year round.

British Indian Ocean Territory

The Chagos Archipelago is an isolated group of atolls and reefs in the central Indian Ocean. The group forms the southern end of the Laccadive-Maldives-Chagos atoll chain. There are 5 atolls, 10 other shallow reefs, banks and submerged shoals and just over 50 islands. The islands are uninhabited except Diego Garcia. The Chagos Bank is the largest atoll in the Indian Ocean. The archipelago possesses an exceptionally low level of pollution and provides a standard for measuring the impact of human pressures on other reef systems.

To date, a total of 91 bird species have been recorded in the Chagos Archipelago and its territorial waters.

All other migratory species are marine including the green turtle *Chelonia mydas* and the hawksbill turtle *Eretmochelys imbricata*.

The UK has extended to British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) the following international Conventions and Agreements to which it is party: the Ramsar Convention; CITES; the Bonn Convention; the Convention on Marine Pollution; the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer; and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. In December 1999, the UK deposited its instrument of ratification on behalf of a number of overseas territories, including BIOT, in relation to the UN Agreement on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks.

The BIOT Administration, which has direct responsibility for the civil administration of the Territory, has made numerous Ordinances and Regulations with the object of countering threats to the environment as they have emerged. The main provisions are:

- (i) The Wildlife Protection Ordinance 1970 and Wildlife Protection Regulations 1984 (the latter protecting from death or injury all wildlife, terrestrial or marine, except vermin, or fish taken in accordance with the Fisheries Limits Ordinance);
- (ii) Declaration, in 1991, of a 200-mile Fisheries Conservation Zone. This Declaration is complemented by comprehensive fisheries regulations, which *inter alia* exclude fishing vessels from all lagoons;
- (iii) Participation in the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission;
- (iv) Diego Garcia Conservation (Restricted Area) Ordinance 1994 (Commencement) Notice 1997, under which the non-specific area of Diego Garcia north to Minni Minni is designated a Nature Conservation Area and the area north of Minni Minni including the 3 islands at the entrance to the lagoon a Strict Nature Reserve.
- (v) The Strict Nature Reserve Regulations 1998. Under these Regulations, the following are designated as Strict Nature Reserves: Three Brothers and Resurgent Islands, Danger Island, Cow Island, Nelson Island, and all islands to the east of a line drawn between the eastern most points of Moresby Island and Fouquet Island in the Peros Banhos Atoll. These Regulations include all internal waters and the territorial sea appurtenant to the named islands and to any reef or bank situated therein. Access to all the areas thus designated is limited by permit.
- (vi) Diego Garcia, less the Specific Area as defined in the Exchange of Notes between the UK and USA (the Diego Garcia Agreement 1976) has been designated a Ramsar site. Diego Garcia, as with the rest of the British Indian Ocean Territory, is made available for defence purposes as

declared in the Exchange of Notes Treaty Series No. 15 (1967) and defence requirements will have priority over any Ramsar Convention requirements.

(vii) The US Navy in April 1997 issued a comprehensive Natural Resources Management Plan for Diego Garcia.

Scientific expeditions to Chagos were carried out in 1967, 1973, 1975, 1978/9, 1996, 1999 and 2001. Surveys of terrestrial flora were conducted in 1984-6, and in the 1990s. Bird surveys were also conducted in 1996 and 1997. Fishing surveys were conducted through the 1990s and continue today. Further turtle research and education in Diego Garcia was conducted in 1999. The BIOT Conservation Consultant has visited for a month annually since 1993. Friends of the Chagos, a non-government body, keep track of work done, advising and publishing to further education.

British Virgin Islands

Activities in the British Virgin Islands (BVI) relating to avian species listed in Appendices I and II, and to other migratory species, have been restricted to the monitoring of waterfowl populations and the protection of habitats. The following migratory species have been monitored during 1998 to 2000:

<i>Larus arcilla</i>	Laughing Gull
<i>Sterna anaethetus</i>	Bridled Tern
<i>Sterna dougalli</i>	Roseate Tern
<i>Sterna fuscata</i>	Sooty Tern
<i>Sterna sanvicensis</i>	SandwichTern

Monitoring in 2001 confirmed the laying of 817 nests of the roseate tern on small islands, at Cockroach Islands, Round Rock and Cistern Rock. The laughing gull *Larus arcilla* also breeds on various small islands. Up to 200 pairs have been seen. Great Tobago Island has the only breeding colony of magnificent frigate birds *Fregata magnificens* in the British Virgin Islands.

The 2,570-acre Western Salt Ponds of Anegada was declared as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention. It is the first such declared site in the BVI. The saline wetlands contain the only breeding colony of reintroduced Caribbean flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber ruber*. The wetlands are home to the critically endangered Anegada rock iguana *Cyclura pinguis*, a species, endemic to the island and with a population of around 200. The British Virgin Islands National Parks Trust is conducting a “head start” programme for juvenile iguanas.

One cetacean species on Appendix I of the Convention, the humpback whale *Megaptera novaeangliae*, has the British Virgin Islands as part of its winter breeding range.

A total of 78 humpback whales *Megaptera novaeangliae* were spotted in 1998 and 1999 winter seasons, in British Virgin Islands waters. The bottlenose dolphin *Tursiops truncatus* and common dolphin *Delphinus delphis* can be found all year round but not in large numbers. Consideration is being given to declare British Virgin Islands waters a marine mammal sanctuary. Humpback whales *Megaptera novaeangliae* and other cetaceans are not hunted in British Virgin Islands waters. There is minimal whale watching activities; reports of whale sightings are given by visiting yachtsmen sailing in the waters

Four marine turtle species on Appendix I of the Convention are found in British Virgin Island waters;

<i>Chelonia mydas</i>	Green Turtle
<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>	Leatherback Turtle
<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>	Hawksbill Turtle
<i>Caretta Caretta</i>	Loggerhead Turtle

All turtles are protected in the British Virgin Islands under the provisions of the Turtles Act 1986 during the closed season 1 April to 30 November when it is illegal to catch or take or sell any turtle and turtle eggs (eggs are protected year round). During the open season 1 December to 31 March fishers take hawksbill and green turtles. Figures are not available for the takes. Leatherback turtles only nest in the British Virgin Islands between late March and June, and thus are offered protection by the law. The annual leatherback turtle nesting population consists of approximately 10 to 15 individuals. The number of leatherback turtle nests was 39 in 1998, 33 in 1999 and 63 in 1999.

Cayman Islands

Activities in the Cayman Islands relating to species listed on Appendix I and II have been restricted to the monitoring of birds and marine turtles. The monitoring data on birds have been collected through the private initiative of a resident ornithologist, Mrs. Patricia Bradley, and are published in her book *The Birds of the Cayman Islands* (Ref: Bradley, P.E. 2000. The Birds of the Cayman Islands. Annotated Checklist No 19. British Ornithologists' Union. England)

Bird Species which have been monitored include

<i>Scientific Name</i>	Common Name	General Status	Breeding Status
<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	Sandwich Tern	Rare winter and passage migrant, observed in small flocks	Non-Breeding
<i>Sterna anaethetus</i>	Bridled Tern	Very uncommon migrant, <u>except</u> , Breeding on small cay off Barker's, Grand Cayman since 1995, circa 20 pairs.	Breeding
<i>Sterna antillarum</i>	Least Tern	Total for the three islands, circa 200 pairs, with decline on Grand Cayman and increases in Little Cayman and Cayman Brac	Breeding
<i>Sterna caspia</i>	Caspian Tern	Rare winter and passage migrant, seen singly	Non-Breeding
<i>Sterna maxima</i>	Royal Tern	Fairly common resident	Non-Breeding
<i>Sterna nilotica</i>	Gull-Billed Tern	Casual, very uncommon visitor, seen singly in all months	Non-Breeding
<i>Plegadis falcinellus</i>	Glossy Ibis	Observed in all months, irregular flocks up to 100 which remain for extended periods	Non-Breeding
<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	Osprey	Uncommon winter resident, numbers have declined since the 1980s, also fairly common passage migrant with flocks up to 6 observed	Non-Breeding
<i>Chlidonias niger</i>	Black Tern	Uncommon passage migrant in spring and fall	Non-Breeding

A number of whales and smaller cetaceans are reported in Cayman waters every year. However, there is currently no directed observation or study of these animals and identification to species

level from reported sightings is normally impractical. These animals are considered to be irregular to rare in the Cayman Islands.

Four species of marine turtle are known to occur in the Cayman Islands: green (*Chelonia mydas*), hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*) and leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) turtles. The leatherback is not found with any regularity in Cayman waters. Detailed scientific research on wild nesting marine turtles in the Cayman Islands is just beginning (starting in 1998 with a grant from the United Kingdom) and there is now ongoing research on wild, non-nesting, turtles, involving a programme of in-water capture surveys. Data are collected on location, species and size. Blood and tissue samples taken and tags are attached.

A daytime beach survey of potential turtle nesting beaches on Grand Cayman (GC) was conducted during the 1999, 2000 and 2001 nesting seasons and in Little Cayman (LC) during the 1998, 2000 and 2001 nesting seasons. Potential nesting beaches on the third island, Cayman Brac, have been identified but are not currently monitored because of logistical constraints and the relatively small area of these beaches. The number and location of nests and other observed marine turtle activity is recorded and mapped, as are numbers of eggs laid, hatch success, nest depth, and species of turtle. Tissue samples are taken from unhatched specimens to contribute to a study of DNA being carried out in the US. In addition, potential threats to turtle nests or nesting activity are assessed and steps taken to mitigate these threats whenever possible. The survey results obtained since the previous report are produced below. Although marine turtles are actively nesting in the Cayman Islands, the relatively low numbers reported (compared to available area and anecdotal historical populations) along with the low average hatch success of marine turtles suggest a population in a critical state. In order to protect the extremely fragile marine turtle nesting population of the Cayman Islands a number of management recommendations have been made.

Species	Number of nests (minimum)					
	Little Cayman			Grand Cayman		
	1998	2000	2001	1999	2000	2001
Loggerhead (<i>Caretta caretta</i>)	0	0	1	18	27	30
Hawksbill (<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>)	2	0	0	2	0	0
Green (<i>Chelonia mydas</i>)	9	9	3	1	17	0
Unidentified	4	2	4	2	1	0
Total	15	11	8	23	45	29

NB: the data for the 2001 nesting season is preliminary and has not yet been published

Falkland Islands

The Falkland Islands lie within the range of a number of migratory species listed in Appendices I and II of the Convention. The Governor of the Falkland Islands is responsible for ensuring that the Islands comply with obligations imposed by the provisions of international conventions and he is responsible for co-ordinating any actions which are required to be taken in respect of the Islands.

Four species on Appendix I of the Convention have the Falkland Islands as part of their ranges:

<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>	Blue Whale
<i>Chloephaga rubidiceps</i>	Ruddy-headed Goose
<i>Eubalaena australis</i>	Southern Right Whale
<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>	Humpback Whale

All cetaceans are protected in Falkland Islands waters under the provisions of the Marine Mammals Ordinance 1992 which makes it a criminal offence to take, wound or kill any marine mammal (which includes all species of cetaceans). It is also a criminal offence under the provisions of the Conservation of Wildlife and Nature Ordinance 1999 to kill, attempt to kill, injure or take any wild animal or bird in the Falkland Islands (other than those specifically excepted). This legislation provides protection for the ruddy-headed goose *Chloephaga rubidiceps* and also replaces the Wild Animals and Birds Protection Ordinance 1964 and the Nature Reserves Ordinance 1964. There is insufficient data available on the Falklands population of *Chloephaga rubidiceps* to state whether this population is truly migratory. The species is recorded from around the Islands at all times of year, however whether a proportion migrate is unknown as yet. Further research on the genetics, range and distribution is required.

The species on Appendix II of the Convention, which have the Falkland Islands as part of their range, include:

<i>Calidris alba</i>	Sanderling
<i>Calidris fuscicollis</i>	White-rumped Sandpiper
<i>Cephalorhynchus commersoni</i>	Commerson's Dolphin
<i>Coscoroba coscoroba</i>	Coscoroba Swan
<i>Gallinago paraguaiiae</i>	Magellanic Snipe
<i>Lagenorhynchus australis</i>	Peale's Dolphin
<i>Lagenorhynchus obscurus</i>	Dusky Dolphin
<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	Whimbrel
<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	Arctic Tern
<i>Diomedea melanophris</i>	Black-browed Albatross
<i>Macronectes giganteus</i>	Southern Giant Petrel
<i>Macronectes halli</i>	Northern Giant Petrel

In the Falkland Islands, information on survey, monitoring and research activities relating to species listed in Appendices I and II of the Convention, and to other migratory species, include:

Surveys

A number of migratory species of penguins are seasonal visitors to the Falkland Islands where breeding takes place. Several studies of different species of penguin have been undertaken with the support of the Falkland Islands Government by the New Island South Conservation Trust or by Falklands Conservation - an independent Non-Governmental Organisation which receives financial support from the Government. In the 1995/96 breeding season, a complete census of the rockhopper penguin *Eudytes c. chrysochome* was conducted by Falklands Conservation. This showed a population of approximately 300,000 pairs compared to an estimated 3,169,000 in 1932/33. This census was repeated in 2000-1 with private funding and showed a population of 272,000 breeding pairs. When taken with the slight methodological changes between the two censuses, it is now estimated that this population is stable. The census by Falklands Conservation in 2000-1 also covered the Black-browed Albatross *Diomedea melanophris*, which was shown to

have undergone a significant population decline, from an estimated 468,000 pairs in 1995/6 to 382,000 pairs in 2000-1.

Another important group of migratory species are those belonging to the sea-lion and seal families. A few species visit the Islands, some for breeding purposes. A number of studies have been carried out in relation to the sea lion and seal populations of the Islands and surrounding waters. There has been a dramatic decrease in the southern sea lion *Otaria flavescens* population that visits the Islands. In 1995, a survey by Falklands Conservation and the SMRU estimated that the number of sea lion pups born at the various breeding locations on the Islands was 2,000 - compared with an estimated 80,000 in 1934. The southern elephant seal *Mirounga leonina* also breeds at several small sites round the Falkland Islands. The total breeding population is probably less than 4,000 animals, with colonies ranging in size from 200 to 300 animals. The main colony is on Sea Lion Island, where a study of their demography and breeding biology is being carried out. Although no mass migration of elephant seals has been recorded, it is known that in winter most adults stay at sea to feed largely on squid and fish.

In December 1995, Brown and Root Environmental and Imperial College Consultants Limited, with assistance from Falklands Conservation and South Atlantic Marine Services Limited, were commissioned by the Falkland Islands Government to undertake an environmental baseline survey of the Islands. This survey comprised a desk study, a shallow marine survey and the development of a geographic information system or database. It was commissioned primarily to establish a base from which the comparative effects of oil exploration and production activities may be measured.

Monitoring

The Falkland Islands Seabird Monitoring Programme, established 16 years ago by Falklands Conservation, aims to assess the long-term impact of offshore squid and finfish fisheries on the Falkland Islands seabird populations. As part of this programme, Falklands Conservation conducts annual monitoring studies on the population of the king penguin *Aptenodytes patagonicus*, the breeding success and diet of the gentoo penguin *Pygoscelis papua*, rockhopper penguin *Eudyptes chrysocome*, Magellanic penguin *Spheniscus magellanicus* and the black-browed albatross *Diomedea melanophris*. (Black-browed albatross records from different sites have been kept for the 16 years). In addition, preliminary work to establish the density of occupied Magellanic penguin burrows at various known breeding sites was carried out as the first stage in an assessment of the total Falklands population of this species.

The following breeding species migrate regularly to and from the Islands and adjacent waters. Species listed with an asterisk * are those where migration is suspected but not confirmed:

<i>Anthus correndera</i>	Falkland Pipit*
<i>Catharacta antarctica</i>	Falkland Skua
<i>Charadrius falklandicus</i>	Two-banded Plover
<i>Charadrius modestus</i>	Rufous-chested Dotterel*
<i>Diomedea melanophris</i>	Black-browed Albatross
<i>Eudyptes chrysocome</i>	Southern Rockhopper Penguin
<i>Eudyptes chrysolophus</i>	Macaroni Penguin
<i>Fregetta tropica</i>	Black-bellied Storm Petrel
<i>Gallinago paraguayia</i>	Magellan Snipe*
<i>Garrodia nereis</i>	Grey-backed Storm Petrel
<i>Macronectes giganteus</i>	Southern Giant Petrel
<i>Oceanites oceanicus</i>	Wilson's Storm Petrel
<i>Pachyptila turtur</i>	Fairy Prion*

<i>Pachyptila belcheri</i>	Slender-billed Prion
<i>Pelecanoides urinatrix</i>	Common Diving Petrel*
<i>Procellaria aequinoctialis</i>	White-chinned Petrel
<i>Puffinus gravis</i>	Greater Shearwater
<i>Puffinus griseus</i>	Sooty Shearwater
<i>Pygoscelis papua</i>	Gentoo Penguin
<i>Spheniscus magellanicus</i>	Magellanic Penguin
<i>Sterna hirundinacea</i>	South American Tern

The following species are regular non-breeding visitors. Species listed with an asterisk (*) are those where breeding is suspected but not confirmed:

<i>Anas cyanoptera</i>	Cinnamon Teal
<i>Anas platylea</i>	Red Shoveler
<i>Eubulcus ibis</i>	Cattle Egret
<i>Calidris alba</i>	Sanderling
<i>Calidris fuscicollis</i>	White-rumped Sandpiper
<i>Catharacta maccormicki</i>	South Polar Skua
<i>Catharacta chilensis</i>	Chilean Skua
<i>Chionis alba</i>	Snowy Sheathbill
<i>Chioephaga poliocephala</i>	Ashy-headed Goose*
<i>Coscoroba coscoroba</i>	Coscoroba Swan
<i>Daption capense</i>	Cape Petrel
<i>Diomedea chrysostoma</i>	Grey-headed Albatross
<i>Diomedea epomophora</i>	Royal Albatross
<i>Diomedea exulans</i>	Wandering Albatross
<i>Fulmaris glacialis</i>	Southern Fulmar
<i>Haloboena caerulea</i>	Blue Petrel
<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Barn Swallow
<i>Macronectus halli</i>	Halls or Northern Giant Petrel*
<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	Whimbrel
<i>Pachyptila vittata</i>	Broad-billed Prion
<i>Pachyptila desolata</i>	Dove Prion
<i>Phoebastria palpebrata</i>	Light-mantled Sooty Albatross
<i>Lugensa brevirostris</i>	Kerguelen Petrel
<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	Arctic Tern
<i>Sterna vittata</i>	Antarctic Tern
<i>Tachycineta leucopyga</i>	Chilean Swallow
<i>Tyto alba</i>	Barn Owl*

Between February 1998 and January 2001, data on 57 species of seabirds and 17 species of mammals were collected as part of JNCC's Seabird at Sea research programme in the waters surrounding the Falkland Islands. The work involved 91 cruises, surveying approximately 21,000 km² of water. An atlas depicting vulnerability of seabirds to surface pollution was produced in 2001²¹, and a final report depicting seabird distribution and abundance was published in 2002²².

Research into the foraging range and behaviour of Southern Rockhopper Penguins *Eudyptes chrysocome* and Magellanic Penguins *Spheniscus magellanicus* from colonies on the north coast of

²¹ White, R.W., Gillon, K.W., Black, A.D., and Reid, J.B. 2001. *Vulnerable concentrations of seabirds in Falkland Islands waters*. JNCC, Peterborough.

²² White, R.W., Gillon, K.W., Black, A.D., and Reid, J.B. 2002. *The distribution of seabirds and marine mammals in Falkland Islands Waters*. JNCC, Peterborough.

East Falkland was undertaken by Falklands Conservation with funding from the oil industry and additional support from the Antarctic Research Trust (ART) and the Falkland Islands Government. The research was continued for another two years with funding from ART, the Wellcome Foundation and the Falkland Islands Government. This further research covered sites to the south-east and north-west of the Falklands as well as the north coast of East Falkland.

The Falkland Islands Government also runs a programme of research co-ordinated by the Environmental Planning Department. Under this programme the New Island South Conservation Trust and the University of Washington have received financial support for research on the foraging range and behaviour of three species of penguin from New Island. Similarly, funding was provided for research by Falklands Conservation and the British Antarctic Survey on the foraging range and behaviour of the Black-browed Albatross *Diomedea melanophris* from Saunders Island.

The research into the Black-browed Albatross has been continued by Falklands Conservation, with funding from private sources, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and the Falkland Islands Government, into a third and fourth year of research, assessing the winter range of the species with the use of geo-locator devices, conducting the census and developing a longer-term population study.

Legislation

In August 1995 an advisory document prepared by Kevin Standing (RSPB), and commissioned by Falklands Conservation was published at the request of the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office. This document made a number of recommendations (including revision of existing conservation laws), which may better enable the Islands to take measures to implement the provisions of a number of international conventions including those of the Bonn Convention. The Falkland Islands Government introduced shortly new nature conservation legislation in 1999 which drew on that report.

Gibraltar

The following species listed on the Appendices to the Convention, which have total protection under the Nature Protection Ordinance 1991, occur regularly in or over Gibraltar and its waters:

<i>Caretta caretta</i>	Loggerhead Turtle
<i>Chelonia mydas</i>	Green Turtle
<i>Chlidonias niger</i>	Black Tern
<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>	White Stork
<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>	Quail
<i>Delphinus delphis</i>	Common Dolphin
<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>	Leatherback Turtle
<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>	Serotine Bat
<i>Globicephala melas</i>	Long-finned Pilot Whale
<i>Grampus griseus</i>	Risso's Dolphin
<i>Larus audouinii</i>	Audouin's Gull
<i>Larus melanocephalus</i>	Mediterranean Gull
<i>Merops apiaster</i>	European Bee Eater
<i>Miniopterus schreibersii</i>	Schreiber's Bent-winged Bat
<i>Myotis myotis</i>	Greater Mouse-eared Bat
<i>Orcinus orca</i>	Killer Whale
<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	Osprey

<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	Common Pipistrelle
<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>	Lesser Horseshoe Bat
<i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i>	Striped Dolphin
<i>Sterna albifrons</i>	Little Tern
<i>Sterna bengalensis</i>	Lesser Crested Tern
<i>Sterna caspia</i>	Caspian Tern
<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	Common Tern
<i>Sterna maxima</i>	Royal Tern
<i>Sterna nilotica</i>	Gull-billed Tern
<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>	Sandwich Tern
<i>Tadarida teniotis</i>	European Free-tailed Bat
<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	Bottlenose Dolphin

A survey of bat caves and tunnels is being undertaken although very few bat roosts have been located. The estimated population in surveyed sites is no more than 200 Schreiber's bent-winged bats *Miniopterus schreibersii*. Visual observations and observations using bat detectors have indicated the presence of a sizeable population (hundreds) of the common pipistrelle bat *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and small numbers of other species, especially greater mouse-eared bat *Myotis myotis* and the European free-tailed bat *Tadarida teniotis*. Major roosts have not been located. Numbers have plummeted from the 1970's when surveys suggested hundreds at least of Schreiber's bent-winged bat *Miniopterus schreibersii* and the greater mouse-eared bat *Myotis myotis*. The ringing of the pipistrelle bat *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* is planned, as is the monitoring of their movements.

Funds provided from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office have been provided for the bat survey. These have also funded the protection of Martin's Cave, which was subject repeatedly to disturbance and is the main cave for Schreiber's bent-winged bat *Miniopterus schreibersii*. Bat boxes have been erected within the Upper Rock Nature Reserve and the Gibraltar Botanic Gardens. A booklet for house owners, architects and developers on bats (and swifts) in buildings has been produced.

Both the Rock and Straits of Gibraltar are Important Bird Areas (IBAs) under the Birdlife International criteria. The Upper Rock (making up the bulk of the vegetated areas) and the territorial waters of Gibraltar are protected areas under the Nature Protection Ordinance 1991 and they are being considered for recommendation as Special Areas of Conservation under the EC Habitats Directive.

The monitoring of bird migration continues. Passerine bird migration is monitored through bird ringing by the Gibraltar Ringing Group of the Gibraltar Ornithological and Natural History Society (GONHS). Data are being collected within the European Science Foundation programme on the European-African bird migration system. Soaring birds and seabirds are also being monitored. Seabird passage has been sampled on an almost daily basis since 1 January 1996. Notable birds regularly recorded on passage are audouin's gull *Larus audouinii*, several thousand of which were recorded in 1995.

A marine nature reserve was established from 1 January 1996 under the Marine Nature Reserve Regulations 1995. A marine research vessel was acquired using FCO's Command Programme Budget funds to monitor problems relating to mutilation of dolphins in the Gibraltar area. The Trust that manages this aspect (The Helping Hand) and which is contracted to manage the marine reserve is also monitoring dolphin movements. No further evidence of mutilation has emerged.

St. Helena

The Land Planning and Development and Control Ordinance, 1998 makes provision for the Land Development Control Plan, which will take effect for ten years from June 2002 when the review of the current Strategic Land Use Plan (adopted in 1993) is completed. Within the Plan for greater environmental management, the offshore islands and two mainland nesting sites for seabirds are designated as National Protected Areas. Future management of these protected areas should include annual monitoring of seabird numbers. At the moment the greatest threat to nesting seabirds on the mainland is cats. The offshore islands are relatively undisturbed as few (if any) people land on these islands.

The humpback whale *Megaptera novaeangliae* has been observed annually, close to the coast, around the months of July to September but can also be seen up to December. Usually, only one or two adults are observed with young calves. No official monitoring is in place as yet but local fishermen report sightings.

The green turtle *Chelonia mydas* is commonly seen in the waters around St Helena during the month of December through to March but can be seen up to the month of June. They are not known to have nested on the Island in recent years. The hawksbill turtle *Ertmochelys imbricata* is also seen in the waters around St Helena from December to June but is much less common than the green turtle *Chelonia mydas*. It is hoped that upon her return in July 2002, the Marine Scientific Officer, who has been off island on a three year degree course will be able to establish a monitoring system for marine mammals. Sea Turtles and their eggs are currently protected under the Wildlife Protection Ordinance of 1984 which makes provision for enforcing regulations prohibiting or controlling the killing, injuring, capturing or taking, of any wildlife within St. Helena.

Tristan Da Cunha

The Inaccessible Island Management Plan was published in October 2001. During the hurricane on the 21st May 2001 a forest at the Island of Nightingale was destroyed along with several Albatross nests. It is hoped that this can be cleared this year, but repair work on Tristan will take priority.

The Gough Island bird research project, jointly managed by the RSPB and University of Cape Town, received funding from the FCO in 1999. Fieldwork, involving the deployment of two scientists on Gough Island, took place from September 2000 - September 2001. Population censuses were carried out, and monitoring protocols designed, for Tristan Albatross *Diomedea (exulans) dabbenena*, Sooty Albatross *Phoebetria fusca* and Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatross *Diomedea chlororhynchos*, as well as Southern Giant-petrel *Macronectes giganteus* and Grey Petrel *Procellaria cinerea*. Population trends are hard to determine, because of the lack of previous work. Sooty Albatross appears to have declined, while Southern Giant-petrel has increased. For Tristan and Atlantic Yellow-nosed Albatrosses, more detailed work was conducted, including satellite tracking to determine at-sea distribution and overlap with longline fisheries, and development of population models to examine population trends. Studies of breeding Tristan Albatrosses indicated an unexpected, but potentially serious conservation problem: introduced House Mice may be significant predators of chicks.

Spectacled Petrel Survey

There has been serious concern for the survival of the spectacled petrel *Procellaria conspicillata*, due to incidental longline fishing mortalities off eastern South America since the late 1980's. Current estimates suggest that 750 spectacled petrels are killed annually off Brazil. During December 1999, a survey was carried out to assess the status of the spectacled petrel and other seabirds at Inaccessible Island²³, providing new information on 11 of the 16 seabird species known to breed there. The island provides the sole breeding locality for spectacled petrels.

There were estimated to be between 5000-8000 nesting burrows on the island, of which 3800-4600 were occupied, compared to 1000 occupied burrows recorded during the previous survey. The current estimates provide a baseline from which future changes in population numbers can be monitored. Surveys of Subantarctic Skuas *Catharacta antarctica*, show a five-fold increase on the previous survey, with 100 breeding pairs, while rockhopper penguins *Eudyptes chrysocome* were confirmed to breed at nine colonies, with an estimated population of 30,000 pairs. However, estimates for the Atlantic yellow-nosed mollymawk *Thalassarche chlororhynchos*, which also suffers from longline mortalities, were less than those previously reported. More casual observations also suggest population increases for sooty albatrosses *Phoebastria fusca*, great shearwaters *Puffinus gravis*, and white-bellied storm petrels *Fregetta grallaria*.

²³ Ryan, P.G., and Moloney, C.L. 2000. The Status of Spectacled Petrels *Procellaria conspicillata* and other seabirds at Inaccessible Island. *Marine Ornithology* 28: 93-100.

VII. Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in this report:

ACCOBAMS	Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area
AEWA	African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement
ART	Antarctic Research Trust
ASSI	Area of Special Scientific Interest
ASCOBANS	Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans in the Baltic and North Seas
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BCT	The Bat Conservation Trust
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCAMLR	Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources
CCW	Countryside Council for Wales
CITES	Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CMS	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
CoP	Conference of the Parties
CroW	Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
cSAC	candidate Special Area for Conservation
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (formerly DETR and MAFF)
DETR	Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (now DEFRA and DTLR)
DoE	Department of Environment
DSP	Dolphin Space Programme
EC	European Commission
EFOT	Environment Fund for the Overseas Territories
EHS	Environment and Heritage Service
EN	English Nature
ESA	Environmentally Sensitive Area
ESU	Environmental Service Unit
EU	European Union
EUROBATS	The Agreement on the Conservation of European Bats (now The Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats)

FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
GONHS	Gibraltar Ornithological and Natural History Society
HAP	Habitat Action Plan
IPCC	Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
LIFE	Financial Instrument for the Environment
MAFF	Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (now DEFRA)
MONARCH	Modelling Natural Resource Responses to Climate Change
MoP	Meeting of the Parties
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAW	National Assembly for Wales
NBMP	National Bat Monitoring Programme
NBN	National Biodiversity Network
NERC	Natural Environment Research Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SAP	Species Action Plan
SE	Scottish Executive
SMRU	Sea Mammal Research Unit
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
SPA	Special Protection Area
SCOS	Special Committee on Seals
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
UK	United Kingdom (i.e. England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland)
UKCIP	United Kingdom Climate Impacts Programme
WWW	World Wide Web