

**IUCN UK Committee  
AGM &  
Members Meeting**

**18<sup>th</sup> January 2007**

**Defra  
3 – 8 Whitehall Place  
London  
SW1A 2HH**

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## **Preface**

The IUCN UK National Committee 2007 Annual General Meeting and a Member's Meeting were held concurrently on January 18<sup>th</sup> 2007 at the Defra Office, 3-8 Whitehall Place, London SW1A 2HH.

The purpose of the AGM was to acquaint the UK Membership with the current status of the UK Committee. Following the AGM, the Member's meeting addressed the topic of environmental economics under the heading of "Valuing Our Biodiversity". The AGM and Members' meeting were both chaired by Andy Brown.

This report was prepared by John Henson Webb from notes taken by Dr Vin Fleming and John Henson Webb.

## **IUCN UK National Committee Annual General Meeting 2007**

### **Chair's welcome**

Andy Brown Chair of the IUCN UK Committee welcomed everyone to the meeting and to the Defra office at Whitehall Place. He thanked Defra for their generosity in hosting the meeting.

### **Chair's annual review**

Andy began by introducing himself and giving a brief background on the IUCN World Conservation Union, its composition of government departments, their agencies and NGOs, and its strength as a convening body. He also made mention of the many individual specialists who comprise the six IUCN Commissions. He further noted that the UK had always been an active part of the IUCN, not least because of its sixty-plus member organisations.

Reviewing the past twelve months, Andy noted a profound change in the UK view on the environment, with all political parties recognising the potential impact of climate change and an increasing awareness among the public. The 2006 Belfast members' meeting discussed the theme of adaptation to a changing climate and what it could mean to the nature conservation agenda. However, there is still a long way to go.

As a follow on from the *Wild Living Resources Review*, the *Who Pays for Biodiversity?* project is a major topic for UK Committee. Taken from a proposal by the late Richard Sandbrook, the project is being lead by Paul Morling, an economist with the RSPB, who will be reporting on its progress.

Another shift has been in the raised profile of Overseas Territories (OT), not just in the UK but across Europe. The UK Committee has established formal links to UK Overseas Territories Conservation Forum (UKOTCF), for the latter to act on behalf of the Committee in matters relating to the OTs. Mike Pienkowski (of the UKOTCF) has also been co-opted to the Executive Committee (ExCo). A joint action was the sending of a letter to Barry Gardiner calling for a better co-ordinated response on policy and better resourcing of conservation in the UK's OTs. The view expressed in the letter was that the UK can justly pat itself on the back regarding its efforts on terrestrial conservation, but might fail with respect to Countdown 2010 on two issues - the marine environment and OTs. However, even with small changes across agencies and policies much could be achieved. The exercise also pointed out the difficulties of writing to Government when HMG is itself a part of the UK Committee. An agreement was reached where, if appropriate, a sub-set of the UK Committee could respond under such circumstances.

The proposed Parliamentary Seminar has not occurred as yet; the UK Committee remains keen to find a good hook for the seminar and thus avoid a poor attendance by Ministers and Members of Parliament. The UK Committee is also reviewing the UK Governments' progress toward its

Countdown 2010 targets and commitments, and UK Member contributions are welcome on this issue. The UK Committee, through its ties with ICOMOS, has also contributed to discussion on the European Landscape Directive, now ratified in the UK. Adrian Phillips will pursue this later.

As part of an overall review of the existing IUCN Protected Area (PA) categories, there are proposals to look at the classification of UK PAs as a case study for implementation. The statutory agency Chief Executives supported this as a useful exercise and a meeting, arranged by the IUCN UK Committee, is to be held by CCW at Bangor on February 27<sup>th</sup> 2007 to look at the issues and consider a process. This is not to be simply an academic exercise, so an implementation methodology needs to be robust.

Finally, the UK Committee website has been re-launched and ExCo are keen to keep improving information flow between UK Members. Please visit the site and let us have suggestions for further improvements (<http://www.iucn-uk.org/>).

#### **Report of the 2006 AGM & matters arising**

With no matters arising, the report of the 2006 AGM was adopted and is published on the IUCN-UK website.

Andy noted that at a future occasion the UK Committee would need to return to the issue of adaptation to climate change, to discuss and share views on possible implications for the UK.

#### **Election of Executive Committee for 2007**

With Sue Christie standing down from the 2007 AGM and no nominations received via the postal nomination process there was a vacancy on ExCo. Andy indicated that he would write to Sue on behalf of the Committee and express thanks for her help and enthusiasm during her years on ExCo.

During brief discussions on options for electing to ExCo, Chris Mahon of the Cheshire Wildlife Trust, on behalf of the Wildlife Trusts (WT), put forward an expression of interest in the position. Chris was asked to speak to the WT and inform ExCo of their decision. Regional representation was raised as an issue to be addressed by ExCo, as Northern Ireland no longer had a presence within the UK Committee.

#### **Financial report from Treasurer**

In the absence of Alistair Gammell the finance report was given by Vin Fleming of the Secretariat.

The finances were noted as being in good order with a larger than anticipated carry-over. This was due to anticipated expenditure on the *Who Pays?* project not occurring thus far and the funds allocated accordingly remained unspent. The Committee will, however, be following-up on several possible projects this year, including the parliamentary seminar and the potential Working Group on PAs.

There were no questions regarding the financial report.

#### **Countdown 2010 update: Wiebke Herding (Countdown 2010 Secretariat)**

Wiebke Herding gave a brief presentation on behalf of Sebastian Winkler, Head of the Countdown 2010 Secretariat, on what progress had been made and what was still left to do.

Wiebke reported that 160 partner organisations in Europe had signed on to the Countdown 2010 (C2010) initiative, 1 in 8 of those declarations originating in the UK, and she encouraged others to sign-up. She noted that C2010 targets had featured as issues among several recent EU presidencies. The EU Biodiversity Communiqué has launched various mechanisms for meeting the targets, with the European Parliament to comment on the Communiqué in late March. A Paris meeting of stakeholders is planned.

The focus in 2007 will be on the marine environment and thereafter a conference is to be held on business and biodiversity.

Previously C2010 has been a wholly European endeavour, but links have now been established with partner organisations in South America, South Africa and the Lower Mekong region.

There was also a call to develop a single focal point in UK, to be approachable by other organisations with regard to C2010 information, whose details would appear on the C2010 Secretariat website. Wiebke asked the conference to consider who would be an appropriate contact in the UK.

Wiebke summed up noting that though many activities had already occurred, the momentum needed to be maintained.

In discussion after Wiebke's presentation it was recognised that awareness and acceptance of C2010 needed to be broader and go beyond those who were already committed. Opportunities, such as the German Presidency conference in Leipzig or the Portuguese Presidency conference on business and biodiversity in Lisbon in November 2007, should be exploited. Thought should be given soon to further initiatives for maintaining momentum beyond 2010, to develop a vision as to where the current initiative should lead the conservation agenda.

#### **Implementation of the Environmental Liability Directive: Jim Thompson (Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management)**

Jim Thompson provided a presentation on the Environmental Liability Directive (ELD) and the significant issue of its implementation in the UK. This is currently subject to a Defra consultation (covering England, Wales and Northern Ireland but not Scotland) whose deadline for responses is 16<sup>th</sup> February 2007. He asked if this was an issue with which the IUCN UK Committee should engage?

The 176-page ELD is concerned with the prevention and remedying of environmental damage. The discretions and choices with the largest potential impact on implementation are whether to bring Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and equivalents, within the scope of the Directive. UK Government preference is to limit the scope of the Directive to EU-protected biodiversity..

In discussion it was reported that the UK Government consultation was still open and, though there was a preferred Government view, if sufficient responses were received these would have to be considered. It was noted that that Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) were looking into the situation in Scotland, focusing on the issue of valuing restoration projects and who should be financially responsible.

It was asked if the ELD need go further than existing legislation; what value does consideration of SSSIs add? In reply it was suggested that, without inclusion of SSSIs, identification of 'damage' to these sites and therefore prosecution of offenders was made more difficult. Jim also noted that both the business and farming communities were more vocal than the less-engaged conservation community. The question was raised as to whether existing domestic protection designations would cover this issue, but an answer was unavailable.

Though several members of the audience had suggested that this was an issue for the UK Committee, the Chair indicated that ExCo were unlikely to respond formally, but would encourage individual member organisations to comment and participate.

Jim's Powerpoint© presentation has been reproduced as a PDF file on the UK Committee website: [www.iucn-uk.org](http://www.iucn-uk.org).

With no further questions, the Chair thanked the participants and closed the AGM.

## Members Meeting “Valuing Our Biodiversity”

The Powerpoint© presentations provided at the meeting have been reproduced as PDF files on the UK Committee website: [www.iucn-uk.org](http://www.iucn-uk.org).

The Chairman, Andy Brown, opened the Members' meeting by indicating that the theme of the meeting was timely, given recent interest in and activity on environmental economics. He then introduced Paul Morling (RSPB) who is leading on the *Who Pays for Biodiversity?* Project on behalf of the IUCN UK Committee.

### **“Who pays for biodiversity? (Estimating the UK’s actual and required spend to achieve the 2010 biodiversity targets - preliminary findings)”**

**Paul Morling, RSPB**

Paul introduced his presentation by noting that the initial intention had been presentation of the project results. However, due to an over-run this was to be a presentation on the current state-of-play.

The objectives for the project were relatively simple, but difficult to achieve, particularly estimating expenditure on biodiversity for all UK entities; Government, NGO and industry.

Paul presented a revised timetable for the project

- Completion of first draft: 26-01-07
- Circulate to experts
- Comments received: 16-02-07
- Second Draft circulated: 23-02-07
- Final Report: 23-03-07
- Nature of Output – similar to ‘Living Resources Report’

Paul briefly touched upon the background and rationale for the study, noting inconsistent reporting on biodiversity expenditure locally and regionally and a need for policies to allow for audit assessment and accountability and to be replicable to allow comparison over time and between countries.

To achieve these aims there were numerous challenges to be addressed, such as determining which costs to include, an approach that could cope with the different costs associated with alternative policies and legislation, and whether to look purely at biodiversity or the broader issue of ecosystem services. It was intended that the analysis of collected data would encompass many issues, including addressing priority habitats and species, making regional development more compatible with nature conservation and the reduction of negative impacts on biodiversity of international trade.

Paul provided some figures on biodiversity spend in the UK, between 2001 and 2005, for both NGOs and Government, and also for overseas in the case of the latter. He warned, however, that there may be issues of double-accounting in some of the figures. He concluded that it is possible to develop robust annual indicators, but that expert judgement is required in the analysis.

The potential benefits of biodiversity conservation were varied, some with a direct economic potential, such as employment and activities like forestry, through to health and culture benefits where an economic value may be less easy to attribute.

With regard to the UK’s Overseas Territories, it was possible to calculate actual spend of funds such as the Overseas Territories Environment Fund (OTEP; a fund of FCO and DFID) and by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC); however, very little data existed on desired spend. Expenditure on global biodiversity, linked to various UK commitments such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), could also be difficult to assess. However, in some instances relatively modest expenditure could provide immense benefits to biodiversity.

Paul noted that the weakest figures collated for the study related to UK business, with data for neither OTs nor global impact represented thus far. He requested help from UK members, asking for suitable case studies or costed projects, to help produce a clearer picture.

### **Discussion:**

It was reported that figures from the UK Committee's *Wild Living Resources Review* had been integrated into the aggregate data relating to benefits. Cost effectiveness of different types of conservation spend had not been addressed and, in regard to benefits accruing from overseas expenditure, Paul noted difficulties in obtaining the necessary data and problems thereafter in connecting spend with beneficial outcome. He noted that Defra had just recently commissioned a study on UK willingness to pay for the conservation of global biodiversity.

With regard to a UK regional breakdown of data, it was indicated that reasonably good data was available in both England and Wales, especially regarding Biodiversity Action Plans, but was unfortunately lacking from Scotland and Northern Ireland. However, any details available would certainly be included.

A concern was raised that, in some instances, companies could be obtaining benefits from activities that might leave local populations disadvantaged. Was this situation reflected in the study? Paul reported that while data, such as that for management of protected areas for instance, could be included quite easily, it would be very difficult to estimate the cost to local people. Even assumptions were complicated and of dubious value.

Finally it was indicated that the economic costs vs. benefits to health through biodiversity expenditure would be covered by the study, for example the costs of purification and sewage treatment to water companies.

### **“Valuing England’s ecosystems”**

**Sarah Moon, Defra**

The Chair noted that it would have been unthinkable that Defra would be doing such a study even a few years ago.

Sarah introduced her presentation by noting that she would be talking from a policy context and would touch upon various project and valuation work.

Sarah outlined the domestic challenges faced by the study and how it hoped to address concerns raised by the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. The study was part of a Defra project to develop an ecosystems approach to conservation, management and enhancement of the natural environment in England. It was hoped that an ecosystems approach would provide benefits to Defra's efforts and across other UK Government departments, providing clarity about what efforts were needed and how better to prioritise resources, as well as providing examples of practical benefits, such as an ability to target funding from the Rural Development Programme more effectively.

Defra were working with stakeholders in development of an Action Plan for embedding the ecosystem approach into policy and delivery. To underpin this, Defra were developing their evidence base through six scoping studies carried out between 2005 and 2006; and current projects which have built upon the existing data and focused upon key policy objectives:

1. Inventory study on natural environment data.
2. England's terrestrial ecosystem services and the rationale for an ecosystem-based approach.
3. An assessment of the economic value of England's terrestrial ecosystem services.
4. Four case studies to develop tools and methodologies to deliver an ecosystem-based approach:
  - M6 Heysham Link
  - Parrett Catchment
  - Otmoor Protected Area
  - Thames Gateway Green Grids

The study on 'economic value of England's terrestrial ecosystem services' would build on Defra's work to value ecosystem services e.g. for the UK BAPs and various agri-environment schemes. A two-stage work plan was devised, including developing a methodology to provide a valuation framework and subsequent assessment, to culminate in a series of recommendations by March 2008.

The key outputs would be gathered into two sections; a valuation framework and an appropriate methodology for combining, aggregating and disaggregating the values given.

Sarah then outlined some of the key issues and challenges faced by the project, relating to methodology the need to integrate sustainability into its approach; [see presentation] and in the practical application of ecosystem services valuations. Ultimately, there needed to be ways of capturing the value of ecosystem services (e.g. through government funded schemes such as the agri-environment schemes) a, of ensuring the equitable sharing of benefits and of promoting links between ecosystem services and human well-being.

### ***Discussion:***

It was stressed that the 'valuation' work encompassed both economic and social values, and that even though some benefits could be difficult to account they should still be included.

Sarah noted that the revision of Defra's public service agreement (PSA) targets might need to be addressed after the valuation work had been completed and it was hoped that future effort would feed into development of PSAs.

As reported, the valuation work was seen as a significant change in thinking. The previous UK Committee project, on a valuation of the UK's Wild Living Resources, was to be taken into Europe through efforts by the European Sustainable Use Specialist Group (ESUSG), and, though not quite as thorough as the Defra valuation work, its methodology could be disseminated through various European national committees.

It was suggested that Defra's valuation project could be used as 'traction' to assist with other government departments, though engagement with Department of Trade & Industry (DTI) was not seen to be easy. However, it was noted that DTI are involved in the valuation process and compilation of case studies and that the project will feature in a CSR paper. Involvement with the devolved administrations was also seen as necessary, despite their development of their own programmes, as co-operation for better coherence on research was seen as a positive goal.

### **“Ecosystem accounting - what comes out, what goes in. JNCC's global biodiversity impacts programme”**

**Tony Weighell, JNCC**

Introducing Tony, the Chair noted that this was a new area of work for the JNCC, a shift in strategic direction, both valuable and possibly influential.

Tony gave an overview of the JNCC global biodiversity impacts programme and the premise behind 'ecosystem auditing'.

The objective is to track what comes out of and what goes into major ecosystems and to look at what influence the UK and EU can have on biodiversity through patterns of consumption.

The project moves in a series of discrete steps. The first is to identify commodities of biodiversity significance and any associated drivers of biodiversity loss. This requires that we quantify what comes into the UK or EU and from where, leading to a prioritisation of source countries. This then leads to a determination of which ecosystems are affected, for example considering imports of soya from Brazil and how this drives forest clearance in the Amazon Basin.

Links will be established to other government work and beyond, for example the Sustainable Consumption and Production Evidence Base: International Impacts of UK and EU Consumption (Environment).

'What goes in' will consider the UK international investment position for industries as chemicals, biotechnology, food supply and the emerging market of biofuels. We need to consider a full range of impacts upon biodiversity, from overexploitation of a resource, habitat loss, to the over-arching issue of climate change.

The anticipated users of the project information are various UK Government departments, such as Defra, FCO, DTI and DID, but it is also anticipated that both UK business and NGOs will find the data useful.

Tony then drew attention to some key points. The information mechanism of the project would utilise existing information, add value by placing information in both a biodiversity context and UK government policy context. The intention was to deliver information in a form useful to different users (not specialists) and to avoid the impression of being simply an information technology project.

The project focus would be on countries and take account of a number of different factors- bilateral trade relations with the UK, country policies, biodiversity strategies, plans and actions. It was also the intention to build specific 'profiles' on partner countries, which could be updated to keep the project data current.

Tony began and ended his presentation with an anecdote on the 'value' of a coral species against the value of oil exploration development. He noted as a conclusion that, with the aid of ecosystem auditing, it was now possible to define the economic value of protecting a species such as *Lophelia pertusa*.

#### **Discussion:**

It was acknowledged that a number of broadly similar projects on ecosystem auditing were underway and that sharing of available information would be useful. Tony noted that the JNCC project, set up in conjunction with Defra, could map and quantify any commodity of biodiversity significance, whether high volume/low value or low volume/high value. Though some of the latter could be sustainable, the project was currently not able to apply a score as to whether trade was beneficial or not.

Raising awareness of the issue was seen as important, though JNCC's role in talking to public was unclear. It was seen as more likely that JNCC would provide the information to the UK Government, whether through Defra or direct to Ministers and the latter would then advise the public. However, there was a perceived need to be certain of what information was being delivered before it was disseminated more widely. Through the involvement of DFID the project would enable mapping of development aid and the assessment of any subsequent impacts on biodiversity was a long term aim.

#### **"Economic Tools for the Overseas Territories and other Small Islands"**

##### **Emily McKenzie, JNCC**

Emily presented an emerging area of work for the JNCC, involving development and application of economic tools, including environmental valuation, to support sustainable management of ecosystems in the UK Overseas Territories. A project entitled 'Environmental Economics with the Overseas Territories in the Caribbean' (EEWOC) is being carried out in collaboration with the UK Overseas Territories in the Caribbean.

Emily began by providing some background to the project, noting that nature conservation advice in the OTs is a growing area of work for the JNCC. One of the JNCC's Strategic Objectives is to promote measures that effectively protect and enhance biological and geological diversity in the UK Overseas Territories. Though previous engagement by JNCC had been limited, this is set to increase and now constitutes a separate programme of JNCC work. In future work with OTs, JNCC aims to engage with strategic cross-territory issues, and seek direct involvement with in-Territory projects, especially those that apply to a number of Territories, contribute to capacity building and focus on JNCC's strengths.

The 'EEWOC' project aims to address the lack of appreciation of environmental values, and the true costs, benefits and risks of different policy decisions. These issues lead to a lack of integration with other sectors, under-investment in ecosystems, and unsustainable decisions.

So why is environmental economics in demand among the Overseas Territories? One of the biggest constraints faced in small islands is the lack of quality information and analysis relating to the environmental impacts, costs and benefits of alternative development activities and strategies. Island ecosystems continue to be degraded in part due to the lack of recognition by decision-makers of the value of the environment, and, conversely, of the costs of environmental degradation. In order to improve the sustainability of policy in small islands there needs to be better understanding of the costs, values and risks of environmental damage, and development of systems of incentives to ensure sustainable behaviour and financing of conservation. Environmental economics can help achieve OT conservation goals by improving understanding of the root causes of environmental degradation, assessing and communicating the value of important ecosystem services, and helping to develop incentives for conservation and sustainable use. Economic valuation can help decision-making but must be geared to decisions and policy questions, must be supported by a strong communications strategy and involve stakeholders from the start.

Emily outlined a number of case studies, each with their own policy issues, where environmental economics had a role to play and where JNCC may provide a potential support role. Dependent on funding from the Overseas Territories Environment Programme (OTEP), the project would include developing and disseminating guidelines on best practice using economic valuation of environment in small islands, organise a training workshop for Caribbean OTs on economic valuation, and provide technical support to three Territories (Bermuda, Caymans, Montserrat) in their proposed valuation studies which plan to commence in April 2007.

Questions were deferred until after the next presentation.

#### **“Raising awareness of the value of biodiversity in the UK Overseas Territories and costing conservation needs”**

**Mike Pienkowski, UKOTCF**

Mike introduced his presentation by providing some history on the UK's OTs and their importance to global biodiversity through the presence of over eight hundred endemic species and supporting a significant number of globally threatened species. These included seventy-four critically endangered species (compared with ten in the metropolitan UK); forty-nine endangered species (compared with twelve) and one hundred and seventeen vulnerable species (compared with thirty-seven). Many of these are endemic. There have been thirty-nine recorded extinctions in the UK OTs, despite only limited study, and two species survive only in captivity. The latest recorded global extinction occurred in the UK Territory of St Helena in 2003, after the UK agreed the target to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010 under both the WSSD and CBD. Under international conventions, the UK Government shares responsibility for biodiversity conservation in UK OTs with their Governments. However, despite the small economies and human populations of UK OTs, few UK funds are allocated to conservation in the UK OTs, with the British Government spending about four orders of magnitude less per endemic species in its Overseas Territories than in the metropolitan UK. This appears to run counter to the UK's commitments under the Convention of Biological Diversity and other Multilateral Environmental Agreements.

There have been notable achievements by partnerships between the UKOTCF, its member organisations in UK OTs and UK, HM Government and UKOT governments. These include helping local people establish and develop Territory based NGOs; assisting FCO and DFID to jointly reinstate and extend OTEP funding; and facilitating development of strategies to implement environment charters by UK OTs.

However, to uphold its responsibilities, Mike felt that the UK Government needs to maintain its commitment to OTEP and to push for improvements within the programme; to include built

heritage and increase the limits on duration and annual spend of projects, to encourage existing attempts to resource capacity-building projects and those which try to extend conservation into sustainable development. He suggested a separate fund for large-scale conservation projects/sustainable usage issues is needed. At a stage when, in domestic UK, a project would move into a species recovery plan, it stops in a UKOT because of the lack of resources. This is a fundamental reason why UK will fail to meet its internationally agreed 2010 targets. The question remains from where would such a budget line come? The UK is the fourth biggest donor to the Global Environment Facility (GEF), but UK OTs are not eligible for GEF funds. EU funding, due to bureaucracy and delays, is unlikely to fund more than a few projects at most. FCO is not a major funding department but is funding the OTEP small projects programme jointly with DFID, which is also exploring other funding options open to OTs. However, the Department with appropriate responsibilities and funding levels is Defra. However, Defra indicates that it has no suitable budget line. Therefore, he felt that the UK Government needed a mechanism to address this international commitment.

With increased financial resources the UKOTCF could build upon its established role as the prime route of achieving effective conservation in partnership with local UKOT bodies. However, to do this the UKOTCF needs modest core funding to enable it to carry out this role.

Raising awareness of UK OTs is seen as a fundamental issue, but improved awareness is needed among many government departments of UK OTs and HM Government's responsibilities. Including by the Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on Biodiversity, and there needs to be greater recognition by Ministers and senior officials of the UK OTs as potential sources of "good news stories". And finally, interest from the Department of Education is desirable so that information on the UK OTs could be included in the National Curriculum.

### ***Discussion:***

It was recognised that environmental economic projects might not always show positive valuations for some environmental goods and services, and that studies should focus on quick wins and lower risk studies. Economic arguments were perceived as being robust and, by drawing out long-term tangible benefits, could help engagement by Government or by small organisations with international responsibilities.

Potential audiences needed to be engaged, so it was important to discern the most appropriate issue or 'territory'.

Exploiting all potential funding opportunities required cross-sectoral decision making which, in turn, required engagement across all Government departments and all regional levels.

With regard to the UK OTs it was recognised that, though they were financially self-supporting, UK funding was important to protect their environment, seen as a shared resource, where they lack the capacity to look after endemic species or ecosystems.

### **Plenary session – "Where do we go from here?"**

The Chair asked for thoughts and comments on all the presentations given today and likewise for suggestions on follow-up activities for organisations or individuals. Also, for thoughts on themes or issues for future Members' meetings.

Various attendees indicated that they were encouraged by the number of positive activities occurring and that it spoke of a mindset change among those organisations involved in nature conservation. Careful consideration was needed of the funding required to take the various concepts forward and who should be approached to provide it, such as the Treasury or other UK Government departments.

The Chair asked how the issue could be taken forward, both individually and by organisations, and could the UK Committee assist Defra in taking them forward.

Eric Blencowe (Defra) noted that various viewpoints existed in Whitehall which made for healthy debate amongst the departments. For example, in regard to the letter sent to Barry Gardiner by a

subset of the UK Committee, he welcomed the debate it had engendered but noted the difficulties faced by Defra due to the current funding gap. On OTs he noted that it was difficult for Defra to approach ministers for OT funding, as there was some concerns over using taxpayers money to change minds 'abroad'. But the letter had raised the debate and it may require individual organisations or small groups to exploit the opportunity it presented. The Chair indicated the possibility of a follow-up letter and a possible meeting with Ministers. It was further suggested that the recent 'Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change' offered a way to raise awareness of environmental economics. However, there were concerns that a change of Prime Minister and subsequent changes in Government departmental responsibility might adversely affect currently available opportunities.

Joshua Bishop (IUCN Senior Advisor on Economics and the Environment) noted that he was encouraged by work that had been outlined in the presentations, mirrored by other projects across the wider IUCN. Thought was needed to determine what engagement, through organisations or individuals could be promoted and pondered what could be achieved in the run-up to the 5<sup>th</sup> World Conservation Congress being held in Barcelona in 2008? It was suggested that the UK Committee may have a role in focusing attention on both ecosystem health, perhaps helping to develop a set of robust indices that could be applied across various ecosystems, and in considering post-2010 ecosystem-level biodiversity targets. Wiebke Herding noted that work had already begun on post-Countdown 2010 indicators, with a focus on policy response, but a lack of funding meant that they were only partially developed and that implementation was unlikely.

The Chair then asked how could the concept of 'environmental limits' be articulated? It was reported that research at Sussex University was putting numerical values to such issues to help inform decisions. Robust numbers could be derived from the research, but differing interpretations could dilute the initial impact. A note of caution was raised, that numbers alone shouldn't influence decisions and that there was a risk to being drawn-in by the economics argument if people believe it can provide a ready solution to all environmental problems. The Chair concurred that using economics can provide a way in to argument, but should not be seen as the only option. Where evidence-based conservation was concerned, there was always the possibility of a profound gap existing between the evidence and the needs of policy consideration. Likewise a reliance on environmental economics could be detrimental if the figures provided were meaningless or predictions were based upon poor or bad data. It was recognised that UK Government expenditure on conservation was likely to always remain relatively low, but that individual expenditure on conservation, such as through bird-watching and other related activities, did demonstrate how people value wildlife in a tangible way. It was noted that RSPB are undertaking a study on private expenditure on bird-watching, estimated at between £4 and £5M annually. The figures need to be refined, but they give an early indication of the level of expenditure.

The Chair then requested people's thoughts on themes or specific topics for future meetings?

Agriculture was suggested, perhaps consideration of the future of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the issue of marginal de-intensification and the possible rapid escalation in the growing of crops for the emerging biofuel industry. As part of this, it was further suggested that the National Farmers' Union (NFU) could be invited to attend along with other interested parties external to the UK Committee. Landscape issues could also be addressed, as pressures on land use are increasing and we need to consider how we make the most out of what land we have.

Environmental decision-making was put forward, perhaps linked to the work of the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication (CEC), and looking at the Aarhus Convention and focussing on greater public participation. The Chair admitted that this was a little known area of work and required examination.

It was reported that the Sibthorp Trust were to focus on biodiversity and health as the subject for their 2007 seminar. Roger Crofts noted that another subject for consideration was better and more accurate communication on environmental matters; an issue of ever increasing importance.

An RSPB/NGO meeting on preparing a position statement regarding the ELD was scheduled and Sandy Luke (RSPB) was looking for responses from interested organisations.

The Chair reiterated that the UK Committee was there to help address issues raised by the Membership and that individuals may be approached with an aim to developing the suggestions received today.

**“Proposal to re-establish the ICOMOS/IUCN Landscape Working Group”  
Adrian Philips, IUCN WCPA**

Adrian introduced the proposal by speaking of the six year informal agreement that exists between the IUCN UK Committee and International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). The proposal was to formalise the agreement and to form a working group to replace the current *ad hoc* situation. Landscape had taken on an added importance with the recent adoption of the European Landscape Convention (ELC) and the working group’s remit would be to draw together both the cultural and natural landscapes.

The UK Landscape Working Group would comprise eight individuals, four from the IUCN UK Committee and four from ICOMOS. The option would also exist to invite others to participate should the need arise. It was noted that David Coleman (Defra) had agreed to send a representative to the first meeting to discuss how the landscape issue could be taken forward. The meeting would also establish the working group’s constitution and rules of operation.

In the discussions that followed the proposal met with unanimous support. Richard Partington of Natural England recorded that the statutory agencies had all given their support, with the caveat that the group composition reflected all the UK regions and that it considered all issues from a similar perspective.

The Chair summed up discussions by noting the agreement of all parties and so declared the proposal adopted. Provision of support to the group, most likely via the current UK Committee Secretariat (provided by the JNCC) would be discussed and agreed at a later date.

**Closing remarks**

In his closing remarks, the Chair referred to the fascinating range of presentations given and noted their cutting-edge content, which he believed was a clear indication of a profound shift in conservation thought over the past few years. He urged those present to pursue the discussions that had arisen during the day.

The Chair noted the departure of Achim Steiner to the United Nations Environment Programme and subsequent appointment of Julia Marton-Lefevre to the post of IUCN Director-General. He indicated that the UK Committee hope to invite Ms Marton-Lefevre to attend a future Members’ meeting and to talk about her vision of the future for the IUCN.

Finally, the Chair closed the meeting by expressing thanks to the contributors for the range of their presentations and to the participants for their active involvement. Thanks were also given to Defra for hosting the event, and to UK Committee Secretariat for organising it.

The presentations given on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2007 will be made available on the UK Committee website (<http://www.iucn-uk.org/>).

## Appendix I

### Financial Records

#### IUCN UK Committee

##### ACCOUNT as at January 15th 2007

RECEIPTS		
Balance B/F from 05/06		£11,532.48
Member Subscriptions	Financial year so far	£15,850.00
<b>Bank Interest</b>	For year (to date)	£109.33
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>(i)</b>	<b>£27,491.81</b>

PAYMENTS		
Meeting Expenses	2006 AGM & Members' Meeting expenses	£886.50
Secretariat Contract	1st payment (April 2006 - September 2006)	£5,600.00
	2nd payment (October 2006 - March 2007)	£5,600.00
<b>Bank Charges</b>	For year	£0.00
<b>TOTAL OUTGOINGS</b>	<b>(ii)</b>	<b>£12,086.50</b>

<b>BALANCE (i) minus (ii)</b>	<b>(iii)</b>	<b>£15,405.31</b>
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