

UK COMMITTEE FOR IUCN-UK EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the 51st meeting held on 19th September 2007

Via Teleconference

1400-1520hrs

Present: Joanna Robertson (Chair), Mark Huxham, Chris Mahon, Mike Pienkowski

In attendance: Vin Fleming, John Henson Webb (Secretariat).

1. Chair's welcome

JR, as Chair in the absence of AB, welcomed participants to the teleconference. The Secretariat noted that, under the Committee Constitution and Rules of Operation, the meeting was not technically quorate and any decisions might require subsequent endorsement by further members of ExCo. There was a brief discussion of the desirability of having a formal vice-chair.

2. Apologies

Formal apologies were received from Andy Brown, Alistair Gammell, Martin Spray and Andy Williams (current Defra representative).

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of ExCo 50 were recommended for adoption with no further amendments.

Action 51.3.1 Secretariat to put amended ExCo 50 minutes on IUCN-UK website

4. Discussion on business topics

Countdown 2010 UK Parliamentary seminar

VF reported that he had been in touch with Hazel Phillips (Wildlife Trusts) and Susan Alcorn (Natural England Parliamentary Office), and had received various offers of assistance with the seminar.

It was agreed that VF should continue to pursue the seminar by writing to Angela Smith, Head of the All-party Parliamentary Conservation and Wildlife Group, to request a date either late November or early December. VF requested that ExCo consider the topics, already suggested - see Appendix 1 and possible speakers to be included at the event.

Action 51.4.1 VF (Secretariat) to write to Angela Smith (All-party Parliamentary Conservation and Wildlife Group) re date for seminar

Action 51.4.2 ExCo to provide Secretariat with comments on seminar programme and suggest speakers

Greening the Barcelona Congress

Discussing the response to the UK Committee letter from Dr Purificació Canals (Chair of the Congress Preparatory Committee), it was decided that further action was required beyond endorsement of Adrian Phillips' initial proposals. Lacking any firm information on what practical measures the IUCN intended to employ in reducing the environmental cost, it was considered useful if the environmental impact of the Bangkok Congress could be determined, to use as a benchmark against which to assess the potential environmental impact of Barcelona. It was noted that the likely environmental effects went beyond the impacts associated just with travel, to include waste, use of recyclables and 'food miles' related to feeding the anticipate ten thousand delegates. The efficacy of carbon-offsetting schemes were also raised as an issue, it being noted that not all schemes were of equal merit and proven worth. An IUCN viewpoint or guidance on offsetting programmes would be useful.

Action 51.4.3 Secretariat to draft letter to Congress Preparatory Committee requesting details on practical steps being taken, availability of environmental impact data relating to Bangkok Congress and IUCN recommendations on carbon-offset schemes then circulate to ExCo for comment

Action 51.4.4 Secretariat to seek an assessment of the merits of various off-setting programmes from a suitable impartial source; the Carbon Trust was suggested

Action 51.4.5 Secretariat to circulate Adrian Phillips' greening proposal and letter from the UK Committee to other European IUCN National Committees, using the website

5. UK Overseas Territories

MP provided a brief update on the activities of the UKOTCF, including publication of the report "*Measures of performance by 2007 of UKOTs and UK Government in implementing the 2001 Environmental Charters or their equivalents*". The UKOTCF had been pleased with the response they had received from the Territories, though the Forum were disappointed with the UK Government response even though it had requested the review, and MP suggested that there were indications of a parallel Government exercise relating to the Charters. UKOTCF would be happy to incorporate further information in the report, and also envisaged the next updating edition in late 2008/ early 2009. Any queries on the report should be directed to MP.

It was noted that a second species (the bastard gumwood *Commidendrum rotundifolium*) was under threat of extinction on St Helena (following the recent extinction of the St Helena olive *Nesiota elliptica*) and this had prompted further calls for adequate resourcing of conservation efforts across the OTs and Crown Dependencies. Money available from DFID and FCO was intended and sufficient only for small projects and not for species-recovery or other larger or longer activities. It was suggested that the St Helena extinctions and the threat to other endemic OT species could be raised at the Parliamentary Seminar to try and obtain a commitment to better and wider resourcing. Finally MP noted that a meeting, entitled "Islands and the European Union" was being held on Réunion, between 8th and 13th July 2008, by the IUCN Regional Office for Europe (ROfE). ROfE representatives were in the UK and would be visiting JNCC this Friday (July 21st).

6. Chester Zoo Members' meeting

New Arrangements (also relating to Item 14 and Paper 51.6)

After discussion it was recommended that the postponed 'Re-introductions' meeting be held as the Members' meeting session after the January 2008 AGM, with Chester Zoo retained as the venue. Consequently dates in January were to be pursued with both the venue and the speakers. The Countdown 2010 Parliamentary Seminar would ideally be scheduled for late November / early December. ExCo 52 would be by teleconference on November 22nd.

Action 51.6.1 Secretariat to pursue January date with Chester Zoo and speakers and notify ExCo and Members

7. New UK Committee Chair

With no proposals received thus far, ExCo was asked to consider possible candidates. VF will raise the issue with Deryck Steer (JNCC Managing Director) for consideration at the next country agency Chief Executives meeting.

Action 51.7.1 ExCo to consider candidates for UK Committee Chair for discussion at ExCo 52

Action 51.7.2 Secretariat to speak to Deryck Steer re IUCN UK Committee Chair for discussion at next country agency Chief Executives meeting

8. Feedback on vacancy for second Co-optee

ExCo recommended approaching James Robinson of RSPB Northern Ireland to determine if he wished to accept co-option to the UK Committee.

Action 51.8.1 Secretariat to approach James Robinson regarding co-option

9. Feedback on meeting with IUCN DG Julia Marton-Lefèvre

The meeting, hosted by David MacDonald and WildCRU at Tubney House near Oxford, was considered successful despite the modest attendance. Julia gave a brief talk on her vision for the future of IUCN and various over-arching issues and challenges to be faced. This was followed by a question and answer session.

ExCo raised concerns over potential problems if partnerships were pursued with industry and business, leading to 'donor-driven' conservation – not always directed to achieve the best results. Clear leadership was wanted from Gland and the new IUCN programme 'Shaping a Sustainable Future' was welcomed. The proposed re-badging was greeted with some scepticism, though the idea of 'main-streaming' the IUCN was seen as potentially a valuable step forward in raising awareness of global conservation issues.

As the call for greening the Barcelona Congress had been raised with Julia, there was also some discussion on who would be attending Barcelona from ExCo. The Secretariat were asked to add the Barcelona Congress to the agenda for ExCo 52 and provide details on UK Committee activities relating to the Bangkok Congress, including pre-WCC meetings and events at the Congress.

Action 51.9.1 ExCo to provide comments on draft report of JM-L meeting by October 12th and Secretariat to then post on website

Action 51.9.2 Secretariat to add Barcelona Congress to agenda for ExCo 52 and provide details on UK Committee activities relating to the WCC

10. Countdown 2010 Focal Point activities

JHW noted that the North of England Zoological Society and WWF-UK had responded to a letter inviting all UK subscribing organisations (that were not already Partners) to join the Countdown 2010 initiative. JHW is currently preparing a paper to go before the JNCC Executive Management Board proposing that JNCC also join the initiative.

It was also reported that JR was using the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act to push for Local Authorities to join the campaign under their biodiversity duty; CM had sent information around the forty-seven Wildlife Trusts; IEEM (Institute of Environmental and Ecological Management) had publicised Countdown 2010 to all its members.

11. Actions and matters arising

Actions

All actions were discharged, superseded or otherwise carried forward.

Action 50.4.3 It was still considered useful to contact Barbara Young re the parliamentary seminar – the Secretariat will contact AB and, if necessary, take over this action.

Action 50.13.4 JR noted that anyone wishing to comment on the European Programme consultation document should do so directly to RoFE. The deadline is September 21st 2007.

Finance update

The Secretariat noted that some subscriptions were still outstanding and that the invoice from the Julia Marton-Lefèvre meeting was yet to be received.

12. Secretariat report – verbal update

VF and JHW gave a brief verbal report on recent Secretariat activity.

During a brief discussion on the RoFE representatives visit to JNCC on Friday 21st, JR noted that the biodiversity assessment within European Programme provided a good review and summary of the current status of the EU Biodiversity Action Plan. JR is to take forward the issue of landscape element under the European Landscape Convention.

Action 51.12.1 JR to contact IUCN European Programme conveners regarding inclusion of European Landscape Convention

13.AoB

ELC event at Barcelona Congress

Richard Partington (Natural England) had requested comments and advice from ExCo on the possible staging of a 'Learning Opportunity' event on the European Landscape Convention (ELC) at the Barcelona Congress. As the proposal originates from a consortium of Natural England, Countryside Council for Wales and Scottish Natural Heritage, one of them will lead on submitting the suggestion on line.

Action 51.13.1 JR to ask Richard Partington to submit ELC event to Barcelona Congress programme organisers. JR to send details to RoFE

Nominations for ExCo 2008

Secretariat requested that those elected members of ExCo who wish to stand for Nomination for 2008 should make their intentions known.

Action 51.13.1 Elected ExCo members to indicate to the UK Secretariat if the wish to stand for nomination by September 27th

Action 51.13.2 Secretariat to send out nominations forms to UK subscribers by September 28th

14. Date of future meetings

(See Item 6)

The Secretariat has circulated a paper outlining potential dates for meetings in 2008.

Action 51.14.1 ExCo to indicate their availability for proposed 2008 meeting dates to the Secretariat

ExCo 52 is to be held as a teleconference on November 22nd.
The Parliamentary Seminar will, ideally, be held late November / early December.
The 2008 AGM is scheduled for January.

Appendix 1
UK Parliamentary Seminar : Autumn 2007

Possible Title: “Two Years To Go - What Happens After the Countdown to 2010?”

Possible agenda items:

- What is Countdown 2010?
- Practical Examples of Action in the UK
- Special Focus On Marine and OTs
- Support for those with a special Biodiversity Duty - Police or Prison Service
- New UK BAP Chapeau - the Future – UK Link
- Local and Regional Governments and Countdown 2010 – Association of Local Govt Ecologists and/or WLGA