

JNCC REVIEW: STAGE 1 REPORT

Comments from the British Trust for Ornithology

The BTO is a research organization. We do not advocate policy or comment on organizational issues unless these impinge directly on our ability to deliver sound science. Our comments on the stage 1 report are, therefore, brief.

The report recommends that JNCC should be replaced by a body called UKNAC, which would have almost identical functions to the current JNCC but would be funded directly by DETR and would be governed by a Council that was made up only 50% of representatives of the country agencies. The rest would be independents. The BTO is in favour of this idea because we favour the JNCC being more independent of the country agencies, in order to deliver an integrated service aimed at the GB level, not constrained by particular interests of individual agencies. It is, furthermore, essential that the current system (of determining JNCC's funding through a formula that circumscribes the relative contributions of the country agencies) is altered, because it results in JNCC's income always being constrained by the income of the agency that happens to have been awarded the poorest settlement in each particular year.

It is, however, important that JNCC has the strong support, commitment, and involvement of the country agencies, so perhaps further thought needs to be given to whether having 50% of its Council made up of the agencies' representatives is sufficient to deliver this.

As a rider to this response, we would expect UKNAC to continue to be responsible for the JNCC/BTO contract.

J J D Greenwood,
Director, BTO.

14 June 2001