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For further information please contact:

Joint Nature Conservation Committee

Monkstone House

City Road

Peterborough PE1 1JY

<https://jncc.gov.uk/>

Communications@jncc.gov.uk

To view other newsletters [visit our website](#)

Coral Reef Response Planning in TCI

JNCC supported the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI) in developing a Response Plan for managing threats to the islands' coral reefs through a week of workshops that engaged stakeholders across the islands.

JNCC associate and coral expert, Dr Greta Aeby, worked with the TCI Government Department of Environment and Coastal Resources to deliver the workshops. The sessions informed stakeholders about threats to coral reefs and discussed the development of early reporting networks for mobilising rapid and effective responses to threats, including coral bleaching, disease outbreaks, pollution, and vessel groundings.

The workshops started the process of coordinating roles and responsibilities across sectors for rapidly responding and managing the impacts of threats to coral reef through response networks and a multi-sector, holistic approach to coral reef health.

This work is part of the Conflict, Stability, and Security Fund project: [Implementing Coral Reef Action Plans in the UK Overseas Territories](#), delivered in partnership between JNCC and six partner Caribbean and Western Atlantic Overseas Territory Governments.

JNCC at COP15

JNCC played a [significant role](#) at the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15) where thousands of government delegates and observers met in Montreal, Canada to finalise and adopt the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). The framework sets out ambitious plans to transform society's relationship with biodiversity and ensure that by 2050 the shared vision of 'living in harmony with nature', is fulfilled.

As part of the official UK delegation, JNCC provided expert advice to Defra on key negotiations on a range of targets as well as on indicators and the monitoring framework. We contributed to agenda items on biodiversity and health, biodiversity and agriculture, invasive alien species, sustainable wildlife management, risk management of living modified organisms and synthetic biology. The team participated in a range of key activities, from discussions on the role of science at the negotiations to cross-cutting issues on financing the GBF, including participating in an Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities-led nature finance roundtable and Ministerial session on mobilising private finance. JNCC also co-hosted a well-attended technical side event on Target 3 – 30by30 – showcasing our work on the development of an indicator of management effectiveness of protected and conserved areas (MEPCA).

Providing technical assistance in marine science

The [Ocean Country Partnership Programme \(OCP\)](#) is a UK-led programme funded through the UK's £500 million [Blue Planet Fund](#). The OCP provides demand-led technical assistance in marine science to partner countries, supporting them to overcome challenges that threaten marine environments and the livelihoods that depend on them. The programme works across three themes – Marine Pollution, Sustainable Seafood and Marine Biodiversity. Under the Marine Biodiversity theme,

JNCC leads delivery of technical assistance on Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) to developing countries, in partnership with the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture (Cefas), and the Marine Management Organisation (MMO).

JNCC's Louisa Fennelly, alongside colleagues from Cefas and MMO, visited Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands – two of the OCPP's partner countries – to speak with a wide range of stakeholders and organisations, scoping priority actions to address marine environmental challenges, alongside meeting government departments and NGOs. The trip was invaluable in highlighting the challenges faced by each country and areas where OCPP can provide technical assistance and support.

Launch of Overseas Territories Call for Evidence

We are delighted to be supporting the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra) and the UK Overseas Territories (OTs) in the development of a [new strategy for biodiversity in the territories](#).

This collaborative process involves engagement with a range of stakeholders from across the OTs and beyond. To complement engagement in the UK and in-territory, Defra and JNCC have opened a [Call for Evidence](#) to invite all interested parties to have their say on the priorities for protecting biodiversity in the UK OTs, and to help shape the strategy to ensure it meets the needs of both nature and the territories' inhabitants. The strategy will be guided jointly by the priorities and ambitions of the UK Government alongside the 14 UK OTs. Once developed, it will serve as a tool to guide future priorities and investment in protecting and restoring biodiversity in the territories. JNCC's CEO, Dr Gemma Harper, said: "Small island nations, like many of the UK OTs, are global biological hotspots, with a rich diversity of habitats and species, providing a host of benefits, but this diversity is also often fragile and vulnerable. Development of this new strategy is a necessary step in maintaining healthy and diverse ecosystems in the OTs, to ensure a resilient nature for future generations."

Biodiversity Indicators 2022

The latest [UK Biodiversity Indicators](#) were published on 14 December 2022. Due to a review of the indicators taking place in 2022/23, a reduced set were published for 2022. The review is to ensure that the indicators remain fit for purpose, including in response to the Kunming-Montreal global biodiversity framework negotiated through the 15th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15). The Indicators are official statistics and dependent on a wide variety of data, provided by government, research bodies and the voluntary sector – in total nearly 100 organisations are involved. First published in 2007, this is the 15th update of the Indicators. We would like to thank all colleagues who have contributed to the publication over the past 15 years.