



JNCC Bulletin March 2022

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Reducing Pollution Through Partnership

Environmental pollution is one of the most serious global challenges that affects the natural environment and human health worldwide. In response, [The Reducing Pollution Through Partnership](#) (RPTP) project, a one-year scoping project (2021/22), aimed to enhance the ability of low- to middle-income (LMIC) countries to manage chemicals and reduce the impacts from environmental pollution.

JNCC has developed a pollution Global Analysis tool, created using species data and pollution threat categories from the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List Assessment. Our priority during this scoping year has been to work with pollution experts and stakeholders in a pilot set of countries to validate the results of the pollution analysis and develop an evidence base on the specific pollution challenges experienced by LMICs within their environmental and social context. We have also supported the delivery of capacity building actions on the ground to test our approach and support evidence projects. Information collected during the scoping year will be used to help plan possible actions for the development of a wider Defra-JNCC programme.

JNCC in Geneva

After two years of virtual meetings, March finally saw the return of face-to-face meetings of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Geneva, with resumed sessions of the 24th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 24), the 3rd meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI 3) and the 3rd meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) (WG2020-3).

JNCC played a key role on the UK delegation; leading on crucial agenda items such as the [proposed monitoring framework](#) for the post-2020 GBF, [health](#), [invasive alien species](#) and [soils](#), and providing strong technical input on the draft goals, milestones and targets of the [proposed GBF](#). Vin Fleming and Ella Wooden (pictured) represented JNCC in Geneva and were supported by JNCC staff back in the UK.

After an exhausting 2 ½ weeks, progress was made in some areas, but it is clear more needs to be done before COP15 (date still TBC but likely late summer 2022). Additional meetings are being organised to progress discussions on the [GBF](#) and the [proposed indicators](#) ahead of COP15.

Congratulations Colin!

The Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE), Scotland's National Academy announced its 2022 intake of Fellows, with 80 names from the arts, business, public service and civil society as well as academia from Scotland and beyond. Included in this intake is our Chair, Professor Colin Galbraith.

On hearing of his appointment, Colin said: "I am honoured and delighted to have been elected as an RSE Fellow alongside so many talented people. I look forward to becoming involved in the work of the RSE, especially at this time of the twin global emergencies of climate change and of nature loss. Using science to underpin action to tackle these issues is key, as is providing clear advice and communication on the options for the future."

Colin will be joining the RSE's current Fellowship of around 1,700 Fellows, who are recognised as being some of the greatest thinkers, researchers and practitioners working in or with Scotland. Congratulations Colin!

To find out more about the announcement, visit the [Royal Society of Edinburgh website](#).

Monitoring seabirds at sea

Monitoring seabirds at sea provides essential information to allow the UK to meet its national and international seabird conservation commitments. Data from opportunistic surveys can contribute to understanding the drivers for changes in distribution pattern and relative abundance. Ferries and other commercial shipping are excellent, cost-effective repeat platforms for surveys covering the same sea area over long time periods. As part of the CalMac Ferries [Marine Awareness Programme](#), we ran a pilot project in 2018 to assess the feasibility of recruiting and training volunteers to collect high quality seabirds at sea data from the [CalMac Ferries](#) route network. This proved a success and through this work, the [Volunteer Seabirds at Sea](#) (VSAS) scheme was born. We recently ran another successful VSAS mentor training course, resulting in six more mentors who can now contribute to this exciting citizen science scheme, collecting seabird and cetacean data off the coast of western Scotland, and mentoring less experienced surveyors. Following this, we ran a surveyor course, training another 11 enthusiastic citizen scientists to collect essential seabirds at sea data on monthly surveys. For more information and to be kept in the loop about future training courses, contact Danni.Thompson@jncc.gov.uk.

Abundance of UK butterflies

UK butterflies have been monitored annually since 1976 by thousands of volunteers as part of the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme. This makes butterflies one of the best monitored groups of animals in the UK. Butterflies are considered to provide a good indication of the broad state of the environment because they respond rapidly to changes in environmental conditions and habitat management; occur in a wide range of habitats; and are representative of many other insects, in that they utilise areas with abundant plant food resources. The [latest official statistics](#) on the abundance of UK butterflies, produced through the UKBMS were recently released. This update provides population trends up to the year 2021 for 56 of the 59 species of butterflies that occur regularly in the UK.