



**The one hundred and forty-fifth meeting of the
Joint Nature Conservation Committee held on 3 December 2025
online via Teams**

**Paper JNCC 25 60P: Progress towards meeting Joint Committee
working objectives 2025-26**

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Joint Nature Conservation Committee

Progress towards meeting Joint Committee working objectives 2025-26

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1. Proposal

- 1.1 This paper presents the agreed working objectives for the Joint Committee for 2025–26. The objectives are aligned with JNCC’s strategic priorities and statutory responsibilities.
- 1.2 The Joint Committee is asked to report on its progress towards meeting the objectives, with a focus on progress towards delivering the key tasks identified for 2025-26, presented in the table in paragraph 3.1.

2. Background

- 2.1 Good governance requires non-executive boards to set clear performance objectives aligned with their organisational strategy. The working objectives help to define the role of the Committee both as a collective and as individual Committee members and serve as a useful checklist for collective Committee performance and for individual member performance appraisal.
- 2.2 Objectives are agreed annually at the beginning of each financial year, and it is important to reflect on them in-year to ensure the Committee is working towards them.

3. Working objectives for 2025-26

3.1 The Committee's objectives for 2025–26 are grouped under nine themes:

Theme	Key tasks 2025-26
Strategic Planning and Delivery	Oversee implementation of Together for Nature and the 2025/26 business plan; Guide the Programme of Change and rebalance the funding model.
Scientific Direction and Quality Assurance	Agree new terms of reference for Chief Scientists Group; Establish new thematic sub-groups; Undertake horizon scanning.
People, Place and Culture	Oversee delivery of the People Strategy action plan; Promote JNCC values; Support staff engagement.
Risk Management	Monitor significant risks; Review organisational risk appetite biannually.
Delivery & Resource Management	Review corporate performance quarterly; Support development of a long-term fiscal strategy.
External Relations	Oversee development of a strategic communications and engagement strategy.
Governance	Implement remaining actions from the 2024 effectiveness review.
Working Relationships	Establish a cross-cutting issues chairs forum for coordination.
Sustainability	Support ISO 14001:2015 certification; Embed sustainability in governance.

3.2 These objectives underpin JNCC's strategy to 2030 (Together for Nature), focusing on:

- Driving nature recovery and climate alignment.
- Advancing scientific innovation and digital knowledge.
- Supporting sustainable economies and mainstreaming nature into policy.
- Investing in people and developing an inclusive culture.

4. Next Steps

4.1 A full report on achievement against the objectives will be provided at the June 2026 meeting. A new set of objectives will be developed for 2026-27 and presented for approval at the Spring intersessional meeting.

Joint Committee working objectives for 2025-26

It is good governance for non-executive boards to develop a small number of performance objectives that are aligned with the organisation's strategy. The working objectives help to define the role of the Committee both as a collective and as individual Committee members and serve as a useful checklist for collective Committee performance and for individual member performance appraisal (where appropriate). By their nature, many of these objectives are generic and recurring, although we will seek to further refine and prioritise specific objectives in future years.

Committee Objectives	Tasks	Responsibility	Tasks specific to 2025/26	Responsibility	December 2025 progress update
1. Strategic Planning and Delivery	- Input to the forward programme of business for the Committee, considering strategic priorities, governments' requirements, and JNCC's unique role. - Serve as an effective sounding board to the CEO by providing advice and challenge on strategic and operational issues as required.	- Committee collectively - Committee collectively	- Oversee the implementation of Together for Nature and delivery of the 2025/26 business plan, advising on strategic resource requirements. - Oversee the development and implementation of the Programme of Change for 2025-26, setting the future direction and oversee the rebalancing of the funding model.	Committee collectively	
2. Providing scientific direction and quality assurance	- Scrutinise and agree proposals provided by the executive on scientific matters. - Evaluate whether the JNCC is delivering advice, research and evidence that is required by and adding value to the UK and Devolved Governments' priorities.	- Committee collectively - Committee collectively	- Agree a new set of terms of reference for the Chief Scientists Group and appoint a co-chair. - Agree new sub-group themes and establish new sub-groups based intended outcomes. - Learn from past issues and undertake regular horizon scanning.		
3. People, Place and Culture	- Oversee the strategy for and delivery of an affordable and stable workforce that is oriented and supported towards delivering Together for Nature. - As available and able, participate in staff engagement sessions associated with Joint Committee meetings and JNCC events to develop visibility and working relationships	- Committee collectively - Individual members	Oversee the implementation of the People Strategy action plan.		

	between JNCC's people and the Joint Committee. - As available and able, provide mentoring support to Board observers as agreed with the executive. - Actively promote and role model the JNCC values	- Individual members - Committee individual and collectively			
4. Risk Management	- Agree and set an appropriate organisational risk appetite. - Receive regular risk and opportunity updates through ARAC, with a particular focus on new and emerging risks and opportunities and on the organisation's resilience against the pressures of more than one risk arising at the same time. - Share intelligence to identify risks and opportunities, including emerging agendas of government administrations, other key stakeholders and political sensitivities.	- Committee collectively - Committee collectively - Individual members	- Monitor the management of the significant risks by the Executive for 2025-26. - Review the organisational risk appetite every 6 months.		
5. Delivery & Resource Management	- Review corporate performance quarterly and assist the Executive in identifying and addressing delivery issues. - Consider the implications of shifting resources on performance delivery and provide appropriate challenge whether value for money and the benefits are being achieved and oversee the development and implementation of a long term fiscal strategy to ensure medium and long term financial resilience. - Review the level of JNCC's reserves in March each year, prior to the year-end.	- Committee collectively - Committee collectively - Committee collectively			
6. External relations	- Draw on professional networks to communicate and raise the profile of JNCC to the UK and Devolved Governments and other relevant organisations and stakeholders. - Facilitate collaboration between JNCC, CNCBs and other key partners. - Undertake and report back on specific ambassadorial or representation roles agreed with the Executive. - Oversee an effective communications strategy for JNCC and its science.	- Individual members - Individual members - Individual members - Committee collectively	Oversee the development of a strategic communications and engagement strategy, encompassing a stakeholder mapping exercise.		

7. Governance	- Participate in regular formal and informal governance effectiveness reviews and agree and oversee the implementation of any recommendations. - Participate appropriately in ARAC/People/Remuneration Committee meetings to ensure their effectiveness.	- Committee collectively - Selected individual members	Implement the remaining actions from the 2024 effectiveness review.		
8. Working Relationships	- Promote good mutual understanding of the respective and complementary roles and responsibilities of Joint Committee members and JNCC colleagues. - Work in a cohesive and supportive manner with Committee colleagues, ensuring good, respectful relationships and that a culture of confidence and trust is maintained.	- Committee collectively - Committee collectively	Establish a cross-cutting issues chairs forum to agree workplans, coverage, cross-pollinate and ensure no gaps. Membership to be chairs of all Committee sub-groups		
9. Sustainability	Ensure sustainability thinking and measures are incorporated into purpose, governance, strategy, decision-making, risk management and accountability frameworks, having regard to the UK Government's commitment of achieving net zero emissions by 2050.	Committee collectively	Support the maintenance of ISO 14001:2015 certification by overseeing continual improvement of JNCC's environmental management system.	Committee collectively	

Annex 1

Committee member role

JNCC's [Framework Document](#) provides the legal, administrative and financial framework within which the Joint Committee operates and the specific functions of the Committee and the Chair. [Together for Nature: Our Strategy to 2030](#), published in May 2023, outlines the areas of work that JNCC will undertake, focusing on its role in terrestrial and marine nature conservation and recovery, at the UK level, working with the UK Overseas Territories and the Crown Dependencies, and inputting evidence and advice to global nature issues.

The Committee, under the leadership of the Chair, is responsible to the Defra Secretary of State for the leadership, direction, and effectiveness of JNCC in line with the JNCC strategy.

Individual members of the Joint Committee will:

- Contribute to JNCC's work in providing UK Government and the Devolved Administrations with effective support for their evidence needs and policies for nature conservation and recovery across the UK, our Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, and internationally.
- Understand the natural environment and its vital importance to everyone including its contribution to improving outcomes for the economy and for society on a sustainable basis. This will include an understanding of natural capital and natural resource management.
- Promote a positive and constructive relationship with a wide range of stakeholders across the UK and internationally.
- Take a full and active role in the governance of JNCC, appropriate to a non-executive board. This involves providing support to the Chair of the JNCC in holding the executive to account for achieving work programmes agreed in annual business plans and delivering good value for money.
- Assist the Committee in overseeing the executive's delivery of Together for Nature.
- Provide a valuable source of expertise to ensure that the scientific methods and approaches underpinning JNCC's advice and evidence are robust and appropriate for the needs of customers.
- Take a longer-term strategic view to position the organisation to make optimal use of modern technological, computational, and interdisciplinary scientific advances.

Annex 2

JNCC Strategic Objectives

- Use our scientific expertise to facilitate a collective response to the global biodiversity crisis.
- Use our trusted expertise and judgement to evaluate effectiveness of existing policies and advise on the design of new policies and action to progress nature recovery.
- Lead the discussion to align action for nature and climate change to deliver outcomes that tackle climate breakdown and accelerate nature recovery.
- Continue to innovate and advance our learning on nature recovery so that science, technology and new digital knowledge are applied to drive positive environmental outcomes.
- Work collaboratively to support the transition to sustainable blue/green economies, linking nature recovery to economic prosperity and societal wellbeing.
- Seek opportunities to integrate the value of nature into decision-making by mainstreaming nature recovery into social and economic policy areas.
- Invest in our people and culture to ensure an inclusive, collaborative and innovative learning organisation, where staff wellbeing is prioritised and our partners are engaged and respected.