



**The one hundred and forty-third meeting of the
Joint Nature Conservation Committee held on 18 and 19 June
2025 in Edinburgh**

**Paper JNCC 25 25D: Joint Committee working objectives
2025 to 2026**

This paper was provided to the Joint Committee for decision/discussion or information. Please refer to the minutes of the meeting for Committee's position on the paper.

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Turning science into action for nature, people and the planet.

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Joint Nature Conservation Committee

Joint Committee working objectives 2025 to 2026

Paper by Tracey Quince

1. Proposal

- 1.1 **Discuss** and **agree** the draft working objectives for 2025 to 2026 in Annex 1, considering the organisational priorities listed in Annex 2.
- 1.2 **Note** the addition of some text about a committee member's role at the beginning of the document. This was a recommendation from the effectiveness review last year.

2. Background

- 2.1 Working objectives are a key part of measuring progress and the performance of the Joint Committee. They help to define the role of the Committee both as a collective and as individual Committee members and they serve as a useful checklist for collective Committee performance and for individual member performance appraisal.
- 2.2 Developing a small number of working objectives that are aligned to the organisation's strategy and where it is identified that the Committee can add additional benefit is important when assessing how the Committee adds value to the organisation. The working objectives will form the basis of discussions between members and the chair at annual appraisals.
- 2.3 A revised set of objectives for 2025 to 2026 are contained in Annex 1. These have been updated with tasks for this year, but the objectives are the same as those agreed for 2024 to 2025.

3. Next Steps

- 3.1 The working objectives provide a framework for a discussion on meeting effectiveness and members are asked to consider the working objectives in their feedback on the meeting review agenda item and to what extent the Committee focussed on the objectives.
- 3.2 An opportunity for members to reflect on progress towards meeting the objectives will take place at the December Committee meeting.

Annex 1

Joint Committee working objectives for 2025-26

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.

Independent members of the Joint Committee will:

- Contribute to the Committee's work in providing the UK Government and the Devolved Governments with robust and impactful evidence and advice on 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 society and the economy. This will include an understanding of natural capital and natural asset 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 evidence and advice 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.
- Provide support and challenge to the CEO, including supporting their learning and development.

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
1. Strategic Planning and Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee collectively Committee collectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee collectively

			rebalancing of the funding model.	
2. Providing scientific direction and quality assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee collectively • Committee collectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee collectively • Individual members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee the implementation of the People Strategy action plan. 	

	<p>develop visibility and working relationships between JNCC's people and the Joint Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As available and able, provide mentoring support to Board observers as agreed with the executive. • Actively promote and role model the JNCC values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual members • Committee individual and collectively 		
4. Risk Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee collectively • Committee collectively • Individual members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee collectively • Committee collectively 		

	<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the level of JNCC's reserves in March each year, prior to the year-end. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee collectively 		
6. External relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individual members Individual members Individual members Committee collectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversee the development of a strategic communications and engagement strategy, encompassing a stakeholder mapping exercise. 	

7. Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee collectively Selected individual members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the remaining actions from the 2024 effectiveness review. 	
8. Working Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee collectively Committee collectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee collectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the maintenance of ISO 14001:2015 certification by overseeing continual improvement of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee collectively

	achieving net zero emissions by 2050.		JNCC's environmental management system.	
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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.