

### ***Origin Details***

*Please provide the following details on the origin of this report*

Contracting Party	UNITED KINGDOM
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<i>Submission</i>	
Signature of officer responsible for submitting national report:	
Date of submission:	

### ***Process Summary***

*Please provide summary information on the process by which this report has been prepared, including information on the types of stakeholders who have been actively involved in its preparation and on material which was used as a basis for the report*

- Defra requested JNCC lead on preparation of report.
- JNCC created 1<sup>st</sup> draft response
- JNCC consulted key biodiversity organisations, including the statutory conservation agencies of the UK (English Nature, Countryside Council for Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage, Environment and Heritage Service).
- Defra and JNCC evaluated and integrated responses.
- Defra submitted to CBD secretariat and put final version of report on UK CHM website.

***System of Protected Areas***

1. What is the relative priority afforded to development and implementation of a national system of protected areas in the context of other obligations arising from the Convention and COP Decisions?					
a) High		b) Medium	X	c) Low	
2. Is there a systematic planning process for development and implementation of a national system of protected areas?					
a) No					X
b) in early stages of development					
c) in advanced stages of development					
d) yes (please provide copies of relevant documents describing the process)					
3. Is there an assessment of the extent to which the existing network of protected areas covers all areas that are identified as being important for the conservation of biological diversity?					
a) No					X
b) an assessment is being planned for					
c) an assessment is being undertaken					
d) yes (please provide copies of the assessments made)					

***Regulatory Framework***

4. Is there a policy framework and/or enabling legislation in place for the establishment and management of protected areas?					
a) no					X
b) in early stages of development					
c) in advanced stages of development					
d) yes (please provide copies of relevant documents)					
5. Have guidelines, criteria and targets been adopted to support selection, establishment and management of protected areas?					
a) no					X
b) in early stages of development					
c) in advanced stages of development					
d) yes (please provide copies of guidelines, criteria and targets)					
6. Does the management of protected areas involve the use of incentive measures, for instance, of entrance fees for park visitors, or of benefit-sharing arrangements with adjacent communities and other relevant stakeholders?					
a) no					X
b) yes, incentive measures implemented for some protected areas (please provide some examples)					
c) yes, incentive measures implemented for all protected areas (please provide some examples)					

***Management Approach***

7. Have the principal threats to protected areas and the biodiversity that they contain been assessed, so that programmes can be put in place to deal with the threats, their effects and to influence the key drivers?	
a) no	X
b) an assessment is being planned for	
c) an assessment is in process	
d) yes, an assessment has been completed	
e) programmes and policies to deal with threats are in place (please provide basic information on threats and actions taken)	
8. Are protected areas established and managed in the context of the wider region in which they are located, taking account of and contributing to other sectoral strategies?	
a) no	X
b) yes, in some areas	
c) yes, in all areas (please provide details)	
9. Do protected areas vary in their nature, meeting a range of different management objectives and/or being operated through differing management regimes?	
a) no, most areas are established for similar objectives and are under similar management regimes	X
b) many areas have similar objectives/management regimes, but there are also some exceptions	
c) yes, protected areas vary in nature (please provide details)	
10. Is there wide stakeholder involvement in the establishment and management of protected areas?	
a) no	X
b) with some, but not all protected areas	
c) yes, always (please provide details of experience)	
11. Do protected areas established and managed by non-government bodies, citizen groups, private sector and individuals exist in your country, and are they recognized in any formal manner?	
a) no, they do not exist	X
b) yes, they exist, however are not formally recognized	
c) yes, they exist and are formally recognized (please provide further information)	

*Available Resources*

12. Are the human, institutional and financial resources available adequate for full implementation of the protected areas network, including for management of individual protected areas?	
a) no, they are severely limiting (please provide basic information on needs and shortfalls)	X
b) no, they are limiting (please provide basic information on needs and shortfalls)	
c) Available resources are adequate (please provide basic information on needs and shortfalls)	
d) yes, good resources are available	
13. Has your country requested/received financial assistance from the Global Environment Facility or other international sources for establishment/management of protected areas?	
a) no	X
b) funding has been requested, but not received	
c) funding is currently being requested	
d) yes, funding has been received (please provide copies of appropriate documents)	

*Assessment*

14. Have constraints to implementation and management of an adequate system of protected areas been assessed, so that actions can be initiated to deal with these constraints?	
a) no	X
b) yes, constraints have been assessed (please provide further information)	
c) yes, actions to deal with constraints are in place (please provide further information)	
15. Is a programme in place or in development to regularly assess the effectiveness of protected areas management and to act on this information?	
a) no	X
b) yes, a programme is under development (please provide further information)	
c) yes, a programme is in place (please provide further information)	
16. Has any assessment been made of the value of the material and non-material benefits and services that protected areas provide?	
a) no	X
b) an assessment is planned	
c) an assessment is in process	
d) yes, an assessment has been made (please provide further information)	

***Regional and International Cooperation***

17. Is your country collaborating/communicating with neighbouring countries in the establishment and/or management of transboundary protected areas?	
a) no	
b) yes (please provide details)	X
18. Are key protected areas professionals in your country members of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas, thereby helping to foster the sharing of information and experience?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
c) information is not available	
19. Has your country provided information on its protected areas to the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre in order to allow for a scientific assessment of the status of the world's protected areas?	
a) no	
b) yes	X
20. If your country has protected areas or other sites recognised or designated under an international convention or programme (including regional conventions and programmes), please provide copies of reports submitted to those programmes or summaries of them.	
21. Do you think that there are some activities on protected areas that your country has significant experience that will be of direct value to other Contracting Parties?	
a) No	
b) yes (please provide details)	X

### *Further comments*

**The annotations below should be considered as examples, rather than complete coverage of UK territory. Though the CBD applies to UK Overseas Territories/Crown Dependencies by virtue of the extension of the UK's ratification, they are in most cases not included in references or statements below. UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies are responsible for protected areas within their own jurisdictions.**

Protected areas in the UK are sites that are protected under domestic legislation and European Community directives. Most of the UK statutory protected areas are interpreted to fall within the World Conservation Union (IUCN) six categories of protected area by management objective. For further information on IUCN protected areas please see [wcpa.iucn.org](http://wcpa.iucn.org).

This report mainly concentrates on protected areas in the terrestrial, freshwater and coastal environment. However, the maritime environment is touched upon in a number of places. Sites designated under international conventions, such as Ramsar or World Heritage sites, have not been reported on in detail where their protection is a matter of policy rather than legislation. Many, however, are protected under domestic statute and thus reported on more fully.

Statutory protected areas in the UK are complemented by non-statutory sites. These are areas that are not afforded legal protection, except in some cases through the ability to create by-laws for acquisition and through the UK's Town and Country Planning system, but are locally important for landscape or nature conservation. These sites function as a protected area network, are of immense value, and form an integral part of the UK approach. A range of organisations have by-law making powers to assist in the management of protected areas (e.g. for National Parks, NNRs, LNRs, and SSSIs in England and Wales).

The UK approach also includes public policies protecting the wider environment. Wider countryside protection policies are vitally important to the UK, not only for the proper functioning and delivery of a system of protected areas, but because the wider environment will become increasingly important with regard to protecting the UK's dynamic biodiversity resource when faced with challenges such as climate change. The UK regards relatively extensive coverage, engagement with key stakeholders, and influence on wider Government policies as important strengths of a protected areas network and has taken an approach which achieves this within the UK.

Please see Appendix 1 for a list of statutory protected areas within the UK. Appendix 2 lists non-statutory sites and Appendix 3 details examples of wider conservation measures that will provide a more balanced picture of UK biodiversity conservation. Designations which have been specifically established to conserve and enhance biodiversity include cSACs, SPAs, SSSIs, ASSIs, NNRs, LNRs and Ramsar sites. Other designations also contribute to this goal, but also have a wider range of objectives including recreation (e.g. National Parks, AONBs, NSAs).

For terrestrial and coastal sites, the different types of area designation are not mutually exclusive, and in many cases sites are partially or completely protected by several designations. The great majority of the Natura 2000 network, candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), are underpinned by one or more Site(s)/Area(s) of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI/ASSI).

Q1. b)	Protected area status enables the most important and vulnerable parts of the UK's natural heritage to be recognised as focal points for conservation measures. There is a key role for protected areas as mechanisms for arresting and reversing loss of biodiversity and damage to the natural heritage. However, the relative priority for protected areas in the UK is considered to be <b>medium</b> . The UK believes that a mixture of protected area mechanisms and appropriate conservation measures undertaken through policies addressed at the 'wider environment' is essential to meet conservation requirements and ensure the long term survival of UK biodiversity. Such policies may include incentives that aim to deliver broad environmental benefits such as biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of resources in farming, forestry and fisheries activities.
Q2. d)	Further details for questions 2, 3, 4, and 5 have been combined to give a better overall picture of the protected areas network in the UK.

<p>Q3. d)</p> <p>Q4. d)</p> <p>Q5. d)</p>	<p>The key items of legislation in the UK are listed in the table in Appendix 1 against each statutory protected area description. Information on the legislation underpinning UK protected areas can be found on the UK Clearing House Mechanism website (<a href="http://www.chm.org.uk">www.chm.org.uk</a>). Appendix 2 lists other nature conservation and landscape designations. For the 'offshore' zone (i.e. 12-200+ nautical miles), regulations to implement the Habitats Directive are due in 2003.</p> <p>The selection of sites is based on criteria specific to the type of protected area being designated. A number of assessments are being undertaken to assess the extent to which the existing statutory protected areas cover all areas important for the conservation of biological diversity. It is usual for protected areas to have a management plan or statement which sets out what is important on the site and how it will be effectively protected. The format and style of these varies between types of protected area and between the devolved parts of the United Kingdom.</p> <p><b>Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) / Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs)</b></p> <p>SSSIs and ASSIs are the backbone of the UK's protected area network. <i>The Guidelines for the Selection of Biological SSSIs</i>, published in 1989 by the Nature Conservancy Council (NCC), sets down the selection guidelines for biological SSSIs including: size; fragility and naturalness of sites; and the rarity of the species or habitats they support. Sites may be designated for biological or earth science features. No attempt has been made for the purposes of this report to separate SSSIs based on biological or earth science features, as the enabling legislation applies equally to all the sites and many have a complex mixture of species, habitats and/or geological/geomorphologic interests. The guidelines are followed by the country conservation agencies when notifying SSSIs/ASSIs. The guidelines, reprinted in 1995, are available from JNCC (ISBN 1 873701 72 1). Supplemental guidelines for selection of biological SSSIs with intertidal marine habitats and saline lagoons, are also available from the JNCC (ISBN 1 873701 71 3).</p> <p>In Northern Ireland, guidelines for selection of Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSIs) were published by the Environment and Heritage Service (EHS) in March 1999. The primary and secondary criteria used for selection can be viewed on the EHS website at the following address: <a href="http://www.ehsni.gov.uk/NaturalHeritage">www.ehsni.gov.uk/NaturalHeritage</a>.</p> <p>The country conservation agencies (CCW, EHS, EN, CCW) are responsible for preparing short management statements or management briefs on those sites that are designated as SSSIs or ASSIs, including those underpinning Natura 2000 sites. These documents are designed to set out management objectives for each site for agreement with owners and occupiers.</p> <p><b>Limestone pavements - guidelines for management</b></p> <p>Limestone pavements are a special habitat which is given priority status in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. They are also listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive (EC Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora). The Secretary of State for the Environment has powers, through Section 34 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, to impose a Limestone Pavement Order on limestone pavements which have a nature conservation interest and which are under threat. Many sites containing limestone pavement in England and Wales have been identified and protected as SSSIs. All significant areas of limestone pavement in England are now protected by such orders. English Nature and the Countryside Agency have a duty to notify local planning authorities of pavements of special interest in their area. Once an order is in place, removal of rock becomes a criminal offence, unless it constitutes incidental removal in the course of other activities. Penalties match those for damage to an SSSI, at up to £20,000, or on indictment an unlimited fine. For more information see Defra's website: <a href="http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/ewd/ewd08.htm">www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/ewd/ewd08.htm</a>. The booklet 'Managing Our Fragile Heritage' produced by the Limestone Pavement Action Group, provides management guidelines for open, wooded and</p>
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scrubby limestone pavement types. These guidelines can be found at: [www.limestone-pavements.org.uk/Management/managing.htm](http://www.limestone-pavements.org.uk/Management/managing.htm)

### **National Nature Reserves (NNRs)**

The country conservation agencies have responsibility for preparing and ensuring implementation of management plans on NNRs that they manage. If the reserve is managed by an approved body the responsibility of management planning usually lies with them but the conservation agencies will take an overview. Guidance for producing management plans on NNRs can be found in Musgrave M., Massey M., Holms P., Lord B. Mawby F., and Lambert. D, (Sept, 2000) *Management Plan Format a working guide*, which draws very heavily on *Site management plans for nature conservation: a working guide*, published by the Nature Conservancy Council in 1991. This guidance is currently being revised and replaced in Scotland.

### **Special Protection Areas (SPAs)**

In September 2001, JNCC published a major review ([www.jncc.gov.uk/ukspa](http://www.jncc.gov.uk/ukspa)) of the UK network of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) under the Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (the Birds Directive) (European Council Directive 79/409/EEC).

The review provides an overview of the UK's SPA Network, with information presented on a site by site, and species by species basis. This work included agreement (by the statutory agencies and Government Departments, following consultation with non-governmental organisations) of guidelines for the selection of terrestrial SPAs. The guidelines, developed in the early phase of this work, were applied to data on sites of importance for birds in the UK, in the context of species-specific conservation needs for all the Annex I or migratory bird species that regularly occur within the UK. This has led to the development of a series of species-related SPAs that comprise the most-suitable areas in the context of Article 4 of the Birds Directive. The combination of the sets of sites for single species and those with more than one feature form the UK SPA network. Many of the SPA sites are estuaries or other coastal habitats, and the series thus forms an important part of the protection given by the UK to intertidal wetlands.

### **Marine SPAs**

In addition to the terrestrial and coastal SPAs referred to above the UK is reviewing the potential for classifying marine SPAs. Three categories of marine SPAs are envisaged: a) seaward extensions to existing coastal breeding colony SPAs; b) SPAs for aggregations of waterbirds (divers, grebes and seaducks) in nearshore areas in the non breeding season; c) aggregations of birds away from the coast, probably for feeding, but possibly for other reasons.

Information to define the boundaries of all marine SPAs is relatively scarce compared with landward sites. However, enough information exists covering the first two categories to enable proposals to be put forward relatively soon for a number of sites. Further survey work to define areas in category (b) is underway. Category (c) is more problematical, as predictable concentrations can only be found at a large scale. For instance a large part of the north-western North Sea is known to hold internationally important concentrations of birds in the early autumn, but the precise location of these birds within this area can vary widely between years. The selection of category (c) SPAs are discussed in more detail in JNCC Report 325 - *Natura 2000 in UK Offshore waters*, see [www.jncc.gov.uk/publications/jncc/325/intro325.htm](http://www.jncc.gov.uk/publications/jncc/325/intro325.htm)

### **candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC)**

In preparing the UK national list of candidate SACs (for terrestrial and inshore habitats), additional principles for site selection were developed that interpret and supplement the selection criteria in Annex III of the EC Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora.

In August 2002, the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) launched an electronic information resource, *'The Habitats Directive: Selection of Special Areas of Conservation in the UK'*, which describes the UK approach to site selection and those sites in the United Kingdom recognised as internationally important for habitat and species conservation at a European level. The criteria for cSAC selection and further information can be found on the JNCC's website at [www.jncc.gov.uk/SACselection](http://www.jncc.gov.uk/SACselection), and has up-to-date details about the SAC selection process and the habitats and species represented on SACs.

Sites submitted by the UK to the EU as candidate Special Areas of Conservation under European Community Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (the Habitats Directive) are moderated as part of an ongoing process. Work is ongoing to submit further cSACs sites including marine sites. For more information: [www.jncc.gov.uk/protectedsites/sacselection/background\\_to\\_site\\_selection.htm](http://www.jncc.gov.uk/protectedsites/sacselection/background_to_site_selection.htm)

The official habitat definitions used for inshore marine cSAC selection (up to the 12 mile limit) are applicable, with minor clarification of national interpretation, to a few habitats and species found in UK offshore waters (beyond the 12 mile limit). The criteria and principles used for inshore and terrestrial SAC selection in the UK will be used during the site selection process. For more information see:

[www.jncc.gov.uk/marine/offnat/sac\\_offshore\\_waters.htm](http://www.jncc.gov.uk/marine/offnat/sac_offshore_waters.htm)

#### *Natura 2000 site management*

The sites put forward to Europe under the Birds and Habitats Directives (SPAs and SACs respectively) are the UK's contribution to an EU wide network of protected areas termed Natura 2000. A wide range of organisations are responsible for the preparation and implementation of management plans for Natura 2000 sites in the UK including: statutory nature conservation agencies; Government Departments and other agencies; and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). The majority of the UK's Ramsar sites are also Natura 2000 sites. The management plans for such sites take into account the Ramsar interests on the sites.

Those NGOs with the most significant site holdings are the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), National Trust (NT), National Trust for Scotland (NTS) and country/regional Wildlife Trusts. Where NGOs own or manage land within a Natura 2000 site management plans are developed and implemented in close co-operation with the relevant statutory nature conservation agency.

Guidance on the application of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations, 1994 is contained in: England - *Planning Policy Guidance: Nature Conservation (PPG9)* which is currently under revision; Scotland – *Scottish Executive Circular 6/95 updated June 2000*; *National Planning Policy Guideline 14: Natural Heritage (NPPG14)*; Wales – *Planning Guidance (Wales) Planning Policy and Technical Advice Note 5: Nature Conservation and Planning*. Guidance on the application of the Conservation (Natural Habitat, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 is contained in *Planning Policy Statement 2: Planning and Nature Conservation (PPS2)*.

#### **Marine cSACs**

Unlike terrestrial and coastal sites with a history of SSSIs and their management agreements, most marine cSACs (those cSACs that extend up to the 12 mile limit) have to develop management plans from scratch and this has been a major new undertaking for the UK.

In order to protect and manage marine cSACs, the Conservation (Natural Habitat, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) and Conservation (Natural Habitat, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 require relevant authorities (public bodies with a regulatory role) to ensure that management activities are compatible with the Natura 2000 interests of the sites.

The statutory conservation agencies have a duty to advise these authorities, under Regulation 33 (Regulation 28 in Northern Ireland), as to conservation objectives and operations which

may cause damage or disturbance.

Marine cSACs, unlike their terrestrial counterparts do not have targeted positive incentive measures that complement existing arrangements, but under Regulation 34 management schemes can be set up including appropriate positive management measures. As at January 2003, twenty have been completed (one in Northern Ireland, nine in England, five in Wales and five in Scotland).

#### **Offshore marine protected areas**

Statutory Instrument No. 1754 The Offshore Petroleum Activities (Conservation of Habitats) Regulations regulates the impact of offshore petroleum development. The regulations can be downloaded from: [www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/si/si2001/20011754.htm](http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/si/si2001/20011754.htm). These regulations provide the means to measure the potential impact of a development on an offshore site of conservation interest. For example, before a licence is granted for offshore petroleum activity on a relevant site, an appropriate assessment must be carried out by the regulatory authority (the JNCC) to assess whether there will be any significant implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. The Department of Trade and Industry published guidance notes on the Offshore Petroleum Activities (Conservation of Habitats) Regulations 2001 in October 2001. Further guidance for environmental legislation for offshore petroleum activities is available at:

[www.og.dti.gov.uk/regulation/guidance/environment/index.htm](http://www.og.dti.gov.uk/regulation/guidance/environment/index.htm)

The Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment in the NE Atlantic (OSPAR) has five strategies which cover the conservation and protection of biodiversity. At the fifth North Sea Conference and as part of the UK's international obligations through the Bergen Declaration, a network of marine protected areas including beyond the 12 mile limit will be developed. For more information on OSPAR see [www.ospar.org](http://www.ospar.org)

#### **Wetlands of international importance - Ramsar sites**

Ramsar site designation in the UK has previously focused on identifying important localities for waterbirds. There has not, to date, been a systematic approach to the selection of sites for wetland habitats and non-avian species. Article 2.2 of the Convention specifies that, 'Wetlands should be selected in terms of ecology, botany, zoology, limnology or hydrology. In the first instance wetlands of international importance to waterfowl at any season should be included'. Guidelines for application of the criteria and further details on the process for identifying wetlands of international importance can be found at [www.ramsar.org/key\\_guide\\_list\\_e.htm](http://www.ramsar.org/key_guide_list_e.htm). In November 2000, the JNCC began co-ordinating a review of the UK site series with the aim of establishing a more balanced site network. The UK has adapted the criteria established at Ramsar COP7, and the development of selection criteria for wetlands in the UK is being addressed in the Ramsar review.

All existing Ramsar sites have been related to the revised selection criteria (agreed at Ramsar COP7 in 1999). Further work will evaluate wetland habitats and selected non-avian species within existing and candidate Ramsar sites in the UK and Overseas Territories and will identify any significant gaps in coverage. For habitats, particular attention will be paid to those considered to be under-represented either at global or national level (coral reefs, mangroves, sea grass beds, peatlands, and wet grasslands). For species, the review will focus on fish (which have specific selection criteria) and other groups for which distribution data are readily available (e.g. dragonflies and vascular plants). Defra are exploring the possibility of undertaking a separate review in the UK Overseas Territories. Recommendations for additional sites are expected as the review progresses. Decisions on recommendations made by the review will be discussed through the UK Ramsar Committee. For more information please see: [www.ramsar.org.uk](http://www.ramsar.org.uk)

Ramsar sites are currently managed according to the *Guidelines on management planning for Ramsar sites and other wetlands* adopted by Resolution 5.7 of Ramsar COP5 in 1993 and published in Ramsar Handbook 8. Revised guidelines (Resolution VIII.14) were adopted at

	<p>Ramsar CoP8 in 2002. The UK will review management plans as appropriate during the normal management planning cycle.</p> <p><b>Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and National Parks</b> are designated through a clearly defined process that includes criteria for selection. These are the responsibility of the Countryside Agency in England, the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW) and the Environment and Heritage Service in Northern Ireland. The process involves the testing of the application of these criteria through a complex process of public consultation and public enquires. For more information see <a href="http://www.countryside.gov.uk/">www.countryside.gov.uk/</a></p> <p>All AONBs have management plans produced for them which conform to guidelines produced by the Countryside Agency and CCW. These management plans are submitted to Defra and CA/CCW to ensure they meet the guideline standards.</p> <p><b>Forest Protected Areas</b></p> <p>The Forestry Commission recently carried out work with nature agencies and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) to review the coverage and efficiency of protected areas and protective mechanisms affecting forests and woodlands. A report was commissioned by the Forestry Commission and WWF in 2001 and a workshop was held in October 2002 to focus on forest protected areas. The UK is also engaged in work within the joint work programme of Ministerial Conference for the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE) and the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS) to develop a Pan-European understanding on concepts and definitions and collation of data on protected forest areas.</p> <p>For local sites such as <b>Local Nature Reserves</b> and <b>Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation</b> there is no over-arching statutory framework, however, individual local authorities, or charitable trusts who own and manage a large amount of land for nature conservation such as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and Wildlife Trusts, may apply their own criteria and guidelines across their administrative boundaries for their local sites and reserves.</p> <p>Guidance and information available to support the management of local wildlife sites includes: The Wildlife Trust, (1997) <i>Wildlife Sites Handbook</i>, second edition; the Wildlife Trust (2001) <i>Wetland Restoration Handbook</i>; and FACT (2001) <i>Practical Solutions Handbook</i>. For more information see the Wildlife Trust's website: <a href="http://www.wildlifetrust.org.uk">www.wildlifetrust.org.uk</a>.</p> <p><b>Wider countryside</b></p> <p>Management of protected areas is complemented by advice and guidance on habitat management in the wider countryside (e.g. lowland grassland management and upland management handbooks produced by English Nature: <a href="http://www.english-nature.org.uk/pubs/Handbooks/default.asp">www.english-nature.org.uk/pubs/Handbooks/default.asp</a>). In addition, the prescriptions of the various agri-environment schemes operating in the UK set specific requirements for applicants to meet minimum environmental standards. For examples of such schemes please see Appendix 3.</p>
Q6. b)	<p>Increasingly, the UK has moved away from a reactive approach of dealing with threats towards promoting a proactive approach to site protection. This is based on encouraging landowners and occupiers to enter voluntarily into positive, rather than compensatory, management agreements. Conservation of local ecosystems, such as whole farms or local landscapes, is encouraged through voluntary schemes, as well as through statutory measures. Incentive measures are an important component to achieving positive management of both protected areas and the wider countryside. Thus the incentive schemes and organisations below all work to the benefit of protected areas in the UK.</p> <p><b>Examples of incentive schemes and bodies that benefit protected areas</b></p> <p><b>The British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC)</b> is the main organisation concerned with the shooting of birds in the UK. The presence of BASC and affiliated</p>

	<p>wildfowling clubs with formal tenure of shooting rights has proved invaluable to delivering a partnership approach to the integrated management of key wetland sites. BASC affiliated wildfowling clubs manage 105,000 hectares of land, 90% of this area is designated as SSSI. The clubs have a vested interest in the sites and exert local regulation over shooting practices and levels. Many have active habitat management programmes, bag monitoring schemes, social programmes and co-operation with other conservation interests. For more information on BASC and its activities see <a href="http://www.basc.org.uk">www.basc.org.uk</a>.</p> <p>The <b>Wildlife Habitat Trust</b> (WHT) is the UK's sporting shooting conservation fund. Formed by BASC in 1986, the WHT is an independent organisation dedicated to raising and distributing funds to help the acquisition and management of habitats for shooting and conservation. Through the WHT's UK Habitat Conservation Stamp Programme, money is raised through the sale of a £5 stamp featuring commissioned wildlife artwork. Many clubs require the purchase of this stamp as an annual 'conservation levy'.</p> <p>English Nature's <b>Wildlife Enhancement Scheme</b> (WES) supports positive site management on SSSIs by using simple agreements and standard payments for annual management and capital works. An integral part of the scheme is to promote active partnerships by linking the local knowledge and practical skills of owners and occupiers with EN's expertise. It gives further financial support to land managers who agree to manage their SSSI land in specific wildlife-friendly ways. Nearly 2525 such agreements have been entered into, covering 157,683 ha. For 22,328 ha of SSSIs in England that are managed by voluntary bodies, English Nature's Reserves Enhancement Scheme has made 35 grants for improving their positive management for wildlife. In Scotland, SNH promotes positive management agreements for both SSSI and non-SSSI land through the <b>Natural Care Programme</b>.</p> <p>In September 2002, Northern Ireland's Environment and Heritage Service introduced a new incentive scheme for the management of ASSIs called <b>MOSS</b> (Management of Sensitive Sites). The scheme aims to encourage positive and beneficial management of the special features of an ASSI. Landowners entering into management agreements with EHS under MOSS may receive annual payments to redress any income forgone in adopting management practices that sustain or enhance the conservation interests of the designated site or surrounding land</p> <p><b>Agri-environment Schemes</b> provide financial incentives for farmers and landowners to undertake farming practices that will enhance wildlife, scenery and, where appropriate, public access to certain types of land. These schemes include: Countryside Stewardship (England); Rural Stewardship and Countryside Premium (Scotland); Tir Gofal (Wales); Countryside Management (Northern Ireland); Environmentally Sensitive Areas (England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland).</p> <p>The <b>Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group</b> (FWAG) provides farmers and landowners with practical advice on making adjustments to farm operations and enhancing farm features in order to support wildlife, landscape, archaeology, access and other conservation issues. FWAG also advises landowners on access to incentive schemes. For more information see: <a href="http://www.fwag.org.uk">www.fwag.org.uk</a>.</p> <p>Throughout the UK, the government's <b>Farm and Conservation Grant Schemes</b> pay farmers for work with added environmental value, such as maintaining heather moorland, and the <b>Farm Woodland Premium Scheme</b> encourages and supports the planting and maintenance of broad-leaved woodlands on farms.</p>
Q7. e)	<p>Most international sites are underpinned by Sites of Special Scientific Interest (Areas of Special Scientific Interest in Northern Ireland). Notification includes a list of operations likely to damage or threaten the wildlife interest of the site. Any proposal to undertake any such operation requires consultation with the Government's statutory advisors on nature conservation. In the process of the preparation and implementation of management plans and management agreements, threats to protected areas are assessed and measures are taken</p>

	<p>to safeguard or enhance the management of sites to secure their favourable condition. For example:</p> <p><b>SSSI and ASSI management plans</b></p> <p>Management plans or statements are reviewed regularly (about every 5 years). The review process considers effectiveness against the achievement of objectives and how to ensure the participation of all partners in their implementation. In addition to more formal management plans, fora which allow issues relevant to the management and protection of sites to be aired have been created in a number of instances, often at a local level. Although the setting up of a forum may be an obligation under a management agreement, the individuals on each forum mainly take part on a voluntary basis.</p> <p><b>cSACs</b></p> <p>Management plans for cSACs may exist in a variety of formats depending on the underpinning national designation. The management plan will encompass the requirements of the cSAC features as well as those of national importance. The plan will be subject to periodic review. The length of the cycle depends both on the type of plan and the reason why it was created. With all forms of management plan, where new issues or proposals arise they will be the subject of assessment and if necessary included in a revised plan.</p> <p>For other designations of international importance or landscape designations, such as those listed in Appendix 2, management plans are also created and threats to these sites are assessed. For example, a site supplement covering the whole UK <b>Ramsar</b> site series is prepared every three years prior to the Ramsar COP and forms part of the UK National Report.</p> <p>All <b>AONBs</b> have been subject to assessments by CA/CCW/EHS which identify the principle threats to the characteristics which underline their designation. These were published by the Countryside Commission (now the Countryside Agency) and Environment and Heritage Service. Please see: <a href="http://www.countryside.gov.uk/index.htm">www.countryside.gov.uk/index.htm</a> and <a href="http://www.ehsni.gov.uk">www.ehsni.gov.uk</a>.</p> <p>The overall threats to priority habitats and species listed under the <b>UK Biodiversity Action Plan</b> have been assessed in the context of the UK HAPs and SAPs. For more information see <a href="http://www.ukbap.org.uk">www.ukbap.org.uk</a></p>
Q8. b)	<p>Before a SSSI is notified, an assessment of the importance of the proposed area is undertaken within a defined framework. This includes evaluation of the local, regional and national importance of the species or habitat. Areas of Search provide a practical geographical framework for selection of SSSIs within the national range of variation in both habitats and species assemblages resulting from differences in all environmental factors – climate, topography, geology, soils and land-use history. For further information on the application of Areas of Search please see <i>Guidelines for selection of biological SSSIs</i>, available from the JNCC. The Biodiversity Strategy for the Island of Jersey (<a href="http://www.wnv.gov.je/pdfs/biodiversity%20v1432%20270602.pdf">www.wnv.gov.je/pdfs/biodiversity%20v1432%20270602.pdf</a>) identifies the areas that require protection and discusses strategies for the monitoring, assessment and conservation of these sites.</p> <p>Natura 2000 is a network of sites comprising candidate Special Areas of Conservation designated through the ‘Habitats Directive’ (92/43/EEC) and Special Protection Areas classified under the ‘Birds Directive’ (79/409/EEC). The species and habitats for which protected areas have been put forward are determined on a European scale. The UK participates fully in the relevant European Union committees. For further information please see the First report by the United Kingdom under Article 17 on implementation of the Directive <a href="http://www.Defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/ewd/rrrpac/echabitats/index.htm">www.Defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/ewd/rrrpac/echabitats/index.htm</a>; Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds: 79/409/EEC Seventh Report by the UK Under Article 12: Implementation of National Provisions 1999-2001 <a href="http://www.Defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/ewd/rrrpac/wildbirds/index.htm">www.Defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/ewd/rrrpac/wildbirds/index.htm</a>; and the SPA review <a href="http://www.jncc.gov.uk/ukspa">www.jncc.gov.uk/ukspa</a>.</p>

	<p>The Statutory Conservation Agencies (Countryside Council for Wales, Environment and Heritage Service, English Nature, and Scottish Natural Heritage) are statutory consultees for any development proposal which may affect a protected area of national or international status. Such sites are normally indicated within structure and local plans, and thus form a material consideration to be taken account of in determining development proposals. Each National Park Authority is itself also a planning authority with a structure and local plan which determines where development will / will not be allowed.</p>
Q9. c)	<p>The UK's protected areas vary widely in nature with regard to their designated features and their management objectives. Protected areas in the UK are designated through local, national and international mechanisms. Please see Appendix 1 for a list of protected area types in the UK.</p>
Q10. c)	<p>As part of the process of creating statutory designated sites, consultations take place at the local and national levels. For the majority of designated statutory protected areas, a wide range of organisations are responsible for or have a wider involvement in the preparation and implementation of management plans for designated sites in the UK including: land owners and managers, statutory nature conservation agencies (English Nature, Countryside Council for Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage and the Environment and Heritage Service for Northern Ireland); Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC); Government Departments and agencies; NGOs, local authorities, and town and parish councils. A partnership approach, action involving the co-operation between statutory, voluntary, academic and business sectors at both national and local levels, is taken to effectively manage and protect the features of interest on sites.</p>
Q11. b)	<p>Only a few of the designated sites in the UK are actually owned by statutory conservation bodies. The vast majority are owned by NGOs, businesses and private individuals.</p> <p><b>SSSI/ASSIs</b> - the statutory country conservation agencies in consultation with owners/occupiers and others with a direct interest in the designated land develop management agreements and plans that provide a practical and effective means of influencing the actions undertaken on the site. Without this partnership and agreement, sites could not effectively be protected.</p> <p><b>National Parks</b> are run by National Park Authorities (NPAs) set up by individual statutes as a single purpose local planning authority with twin purposes of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage; and providing opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Park by the public. Funds for the National Park Authorities are provided directly by national government and via the local government authorities within the Park area.</p> <p><b>Non statutory sites and wider countryside</b></p> <p>Many private land owners dedicate their land to conservation interests. Sites owned and managed by voluntary or charitable organisations such as the Wildlife Trusts and Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, are an important element in the protected area network. In addition, a few organisations such as the National Trust and the National Trust for Scotland have the power to create bylaws over land they acquire.</p> <p>NGOs in the UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies also maintain and manage protected areas which may be statutory or non statutory and this is encouraged by the governments of the UK and of the Territories.</p> <p><b>Local Nature Reserves</b> are established by local authorities (and in some cases also by the town and parish councils that are the lowest tier of UK civil governance). Some local nature reserves are managed by committees or 'friends of' groups made up of members from the local community. In England, English Nature runs a grant scheme called 'Wildspace!' that actively encourages local community involvement in the management and enhancement of their local greenspaces. See <a href="http://www.english-nature.org.uk">www.english-nature.org.uk</a> for more details.</p>

	<p>Local Planning Authorities may assert certain areas as being of local conservation interest, providing a limited level of protection against developments of certain types. For example, 20 of the 22 unitary (planning) authorities in Wales have such systems in place (although these areas do not meet the criteria for national designation as SSSI/ASSIs). Areas are given a variety of names including <b>County Wildlife Sites (CWs)</b>, <b>Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs)</b>, <b>Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCIs)</b> and <b>Local Wildlife Sites</b>.</p> <p>All sites with a nature conservation designation are formally recognised through the UK Town and Country Planning System, where county and local structure plans recognise the status of sites as nature conservation reserves.</p> <p><b>Local Biodiversity Action Plans</b> - in addition to the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, which is implemented through 45 Habitat Action Plans (HAPs) and 391 Species Action Plans (SAPs), 123 local BAPs are now being implemented. LBAPs are funded and administered largely through local authorities and the local Wildlife Trusts. Although these plans are not exclusive to protected areas, their primary purpose is to focus resources by means of local partnerships to implement conservation action for the priority habitats and species and locally important wildlife and sites. The content of the LBAPs are informed and guided by national targets under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan so that their implementation is firmly linked to national priorities. The plans also seek to reflect the values of local people and provide a focus for local initiatives. An example of this is BASC's 'Green Shoots' programme. Please see <a href="http://www.ukbap.org.uk">www.ukbap.org.uk</a> for further details on the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.</p>
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Q12. c)	<p>Whilst more resources would always be helpful, especially at a local scale or for the operations of NGOs; on a global scale, the UK's resources are adequate.</p> <p>The statutory conservation sector's main funding source is grant-in-aid from Government. In 2001/02 this grant in aid was about £156 million sterling. External funding from sources such as the EU is available in some circumstances. This money is spent in a variety of ways, including: employing staff, grants (e.g. to NGOs, land managers and local bodies for projects which will benefit the environment), training, survey, research, monitoring, publications and direct management of land.</p> <p>Significant human and financial resources are also contributed by NGOs. For example, the RSPB has over one million paying members, the Wildlife Trusts utilise over one million workdays of volunteer work annually, and British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) supports the work of over 130,000 volunteers involved in both national and international projects. Over 100,000 BASC members actively manage habitats for shooting providing both voluntary funds and labour for this work.</p> <p>The UK Overseas Territories (UKOTs) and Crown Dependencies support a wealth of biodiversity. In the majority of cases, the populations in the UKOTs are low, therefore many have a small resource base.</p>
Q13. a)	<p>The UK is a donor to the Global Environment Facility, therefore does not receive funds.</p> <p>Projects supported through the EU Structural Funds Programmes have included measures to address the needs of Natura 2000 sites. In addition, a number of projects on habitats and species conservation projects at Natura 2000 sites have received funding through the LIFE (L'Instrument Financier pour l'Environnement) Nature Programme. For further information on LIFE projects undertaken in the UK see: <a href="http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/life/cgi/life_frame.pl?prog=NAT">www.europa.eu.int/comm/life/cgi/life_frame.pl?prog=NAT</a></p>
Q14. b)	<p>In the UK there are a number of mechanisms which implement legislation afforded to protected areas (see Appendix 1 and the answers to earlier questions for information about</p>



	<p>specific protected site types, especially question 7 about the implementation of management plans).</p> <p>Each mechanism is reviewed on an individual basis; through this constraints or gaps in legislation in protecting the natural heritage can be identified and addressed. As a result of a recent review, the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 in England and Wales has given SSSIs better protection. In Scotland a draft bill – The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Bill was put out to consultation on 11 March 2003. The bill implements the proposals in the policy statement <i>The Nature of Scotland</i>.</p> <p>In Northern Ireland, the review document <i>Partners in Protection</i> detailed the key issues and sought comment through consultation. The ASSI Bill has received its second reading the Northern Ireland Assembly. The measures relating to ASSIs have now been incorporated into The Environment (Northern Ireland) Order 2002.</p> <p>Data relating to adverse factors operating on UK Ramsar sites are set out in the site supplement to the UK Ramsar report (<a href="http://ramsar.org/cop8_nr_natl_rpt_index.htm">ramsar.org/cop8_nr_natl_rpt_index.htm</a>). Positive management measures on Ramsar sites effectively address many apparent threats so that the potential for harm is not realised. In those cases where adverse ecological change has taken place, this is being addressed by the four statutory conservation agencies either through liaison with the relevant statutory bodies responsible for regulating activities or through the management plans for those sites. Revisions to the legislation for designated sites in England and Wales (and those planned for Scotland and Northern Ireland) provide greater powers to address deterioration through inappropriate management by landowners and managers.</p>
Q15. b)	<p>In the Great Britain and Northern Ireland, statutory sites designated at a national level, such as SSSIs/ASSIs, are routinely assessed as part of a programme of monitoring by the statutory conservation agencies (English Nature, Countryside Council for Wales, Scottish Natural Heritage and Environment and Heritage Service) to common standards agreed through JNCC (see <a href="http://www.jncc.gov.uk/idt/csm/default.htm">www.jncc.gov.uk/idt/csm/default.htm</a> for details). The first full report of this comprehensive monitoring programme, begun in 1999, will be available in 2006. After this, the programme will provide a readily accessible source of data on all UK designated sites.</p> <p>For the non-statutory protected areas there is no comprehensive monitoring procedure across the whole network. However, some organisations publish site reviews. A recent example is <i>Gaining Ground</i>, published by the Wildlife Trusts in May 2002 to complement the monitoring of statutory sites.</p>
Q16. c)	<p>There has been very little work to place value(s) on natural heritage resources, but some resource assessment is being piloted as part of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.</p> <p>In the UK, the material benefits of a natural heritage resource and the economic benefits of a development proposal or project are weighed up against each other through the planning system. By undertaking this exercise, the impact of specific projects and proposals which may affect a protected area are evaluated.</p> <p>Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) of development project/proposal activities potentially affecting protected areas is required by law. In the UK, EIA legislation implements EC Directive 85/337/EEC, as amended by EC Directive 97/11/EEC. Criteria and thresholds are used to determine those projects that are more likely to have significant effects on the environment. Such projects are then evaluated individually on the need for an EIA. However, where a project is within a ‘sensitive area’, such as a Natura 2000 site, an EIA is obligatory.</p> <p>An example of the wider linkages between economic development and the quality of the environment is <i>The Environment and the Regional Economy</i> published by the RSPB. This paper addresses the challenge of sustainable development - to avoid both unemployment and environmental degradation - faced by the Regional Development Agencies and devolved administrations of the UK. It examines the links between the environment and different</p>

	sectors of the economy and assesses these linkages in different government regions. The report is available from the RSBP website: <a href="http://www.rspb.org.uk/wildlife/default.asp">www.rspb.org.uk/wildlife/default.asp</a>
Q17.b)	<p>Biodiversity conservation in the UK is a devolved matter. The statutory conservation agencies (Countryside Council for Wales, English Nature, the Environment and Heritage Service for Northern Ireland, Scottish Natural Heritage) work with their relevant devolved administration to implement protected areas within each of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Joint Nature Conservation Committee has considerable experience of co-ordinating this work.</p> <p><b>Matching Trans-boundary site designations</b> – The UK's only land boundary with another State is with the Republic of Ireland. There are a number and variety of cross-border protected areas between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. These include cSACs, SPAs, ASSIs (Natural Heritage Areas in Republic of Ireland) and Ramsar sites. There is frequent and effective liaison between EHS and Duchas in the Republic of Ireland ensuring that there is a good match between site boundaries and that management objectives are harmonised.</p> <p>For offshore areas, liaison between the UK and relevant countries has begun to address the need to consider establishing trans-boundary SACs and SPAs.</p> <p><b>Irish Sea Pilot Study</b></p> <p>The interim report of the Review of Marine Nature Conservation recommended the setting up of a pilot to test the potential for an ecosystem approach to managing the marine environment at a regional sea scale. This study is looking at need for international co-operation between the UK and the Republic of Ireland to help conserve the marine environment (see <a href="http://www.jncc.gov.uk/marine/irishsea_pilot/default.htm">www.jncc.gov.uk/marine/irishsea_pilot/default.htm</a> for details).</p>
Q18. b)	The UK Committee of the IUCN brings together government, statutory agencies and NGOs to discuss and enhance awareness of a range of issues and initiatives, including in the recent past sustainable use of biodiversity at UK and European level and new protected areas policy issues. The UK statutory agencies all contribute to this forum with SNH acting as the lead agency and JNCC providing secretariat support to the Committee. In addition the statutory agencies contribute to the work of World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) including grant aid from SNH to support the development of an effective European programme in preparation for the World Parks Congress 2003.
Q19. b)	During September 2001 the UK provided information (as at March 2000) on nationally protected areas (SSSIs, ASSIs, NNRs, MNRs) to the European Environment Agency (EEA) for inclusion in the Common Database on Designated Areas. The database is a joint project between EEA, UNEP-WCMC and the European Council. An update of protected areas information (as at December 2002) was provided in February 2003.
Q20.	<p>Ramsar Convention Report: <a href="http://ramsar.org/cop8_nr_natl_rpt_index.htm">ramsar.org/cop8_nr_natl_rpt_index.htm</a></p> <p>Habitats Directive Report: <a href="http://www.Defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/ewd/rrrpac/ehabitats/index.htm">www.Defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/ewd/rrrpac/ehabitats/index.htm</a></p> <p>Birds Directive Report: <a href="http://www.Defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/ewd/rrrpac/wildbirds/index.htm">www.Defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/ewd/rrrpac/wildbirds/index.htm</a>.</p>
Q21. b)	The UK hosts globally significant natural history collections and is one of the world leaders in expertise for taxonomic research. The UK's taxonomic institutions play a globally important role in biodiversity conservation through, for example, capacity building projects and data repatriation in connection with protected areas networks in developing countries. For example, Project BioMap, is a project lead by the Natural History Museum, the Instituto de Ciencias Naturales (National University of Colombia) and Conservation International (CABS 7 CI- Colombia), which seeks to help identify and prioritise Important Bird Areas (IBA) in Columbia through enhancing biodiversity knowledge and data repatriation. For

further information see [www.biomap.net](http://www.biomap.net).

Project BioMap is a Darwin Initiative project. The Darwin Initiative is a small grants programme that aims to promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of resources in less developed countries. The Initiative is funded and administered by the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). For more information see: [www.darwin.gov.uk/about.htm](http://www.darwin.gov.uk/about.htm).

Implementing conservation through partnership is an integral part of the UK approach. For example, in Wales there are 24 local biodiversity action plan partnerships with an average of 25 partners per partnership. Details of these plans are published on the UK BAP site [www.ukbap.org.uk](http://www.ukbap.org.uk).

In the marine environment, work has been undertaken in the UK Marine SACs project. The UK Marine SACs Project was set up to establish management schemes on selected marine Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). Its activities have focused on a selection of twelve marine SACs around the UK and on developing specific areas of knowledge needed for the management and monitoring of European marine sites. For more information see: [www.ukmarinesac.org.uk/project-background.htm](http://www.ukmarinesac.org.uk/project-background.htm)

## Appendix 1. Protected area designations that protect the UK's natural heritage through statute

All numbers and areas as of 31 March 2002 unless otherwise stated.

Designation	Description	Established by	No in UK	Total area (ha)
Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) (in England and Wales)	<p>AONBs are designated by the Countryside Agency (in England) and the Countryside Council for Wales (in Wales), under the <b>National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949</b>, amended in the <b>Environment Act 1995</b>. The <b>Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000</b> clarifies the procedure and purpose of designating AONBs.</p> <p>The primary purpose of the AONB designation is conserve natural beauty – which by statute includes wildlife, physiographic features and cultural heritage as well as the more conventional concepts of landscape and scenery. Account is taken of the need to safeguard agriculture, forestry and other rural industries and the economic and social needs of local communities. AONBs have equivalent status to National Parks as far as conservation is concerned.</p>	Countryside Agency / Countryside Council for Wales	41	2,122,500
Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) (in Northern Ireland)	Originally designated in Northern Ireland under the <b>Amenity Lands Act (Northern Ireland) 1965</b> , AONBs are now designated under the <b>Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands Order (Northern Ireland) 1985</b> .	Environment and Heritage Service	9	284,948
Areas of Special Protection (AoSP)	<p>Sanctuary Areas, originally designated under the <b>Protection of Birds Acts 1954</b>, were amended to Areas of Special Protection under the <b>Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981</b>. Designation aims to prevent the disturbance and destruction of the birds for which the area was identified, by making it unlawful to damage or destroy either the birds or their nests and in some cases by prohibiting or restricting access to the site.</p> <p>Wildlife Refuges are equivalent to Areas of Special Protection in Northern Ireland. The statutory provision of an area as a 'Wildlife Refuge' is a protection mechanism under the <b>Wildlife Order 1985</b>. It was intended that this provision would replace that of Bird Sanctuary, established under the <b>Wild Birds Protection Act 1931</b>. There are several coastal Bird Sanctuaries in Northern Ireland but as yet no Wildlife Refuges have been established.</p>	UK Government	39	1518 ha in Scotland (other country data not available)
Country Parks	Country Parks are statutorily declared and managed by local authorities in England and Wales under section 7 of the <b>Countryside Act 1968</b> and in Scotland under S.48 of the <b>Countryside (Scotland) Act 1967</b>	The Countryside Agency / Local Authorities	36 in Scotland	6481 ha in Scotland

Designation	Description	Established by	No in UK	Total area (ha)
	(in Northern Ireland Country Parks exist as a non-statutory designation). They are primarily intended for recreation and leisure opportunities close to population centres and do not necessarily have any nature conservation interest. Nevertheless, many are in areas of semi-natural habitat and so form a valuable network of locations at which informal recreation and the natural environment co-exist. In Scotland 17.5 % of registered Country Park area is designated SSSI.			
Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes	Significant historic gardens and designed landscapes identified by Scottish Natural Heritage and Historic Scotland for their natural heritage and cultural importance. Inclusion in the Inventory confers a measure of statutory planning control in relation to the sites concerned and their setting through the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (Scotland) Order 1992 (GDPO) and SDD Circular No 6/1992.  Similar heritage interests are identified in England in the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens and in Wales in the Register of Landscapes Parks and Gardens.	Statutory Country Nature Conservation Agencies	293 sites in Scotland	62470 ha in Scotland
Limestone Pavements	Limestone pavement orders afford statutory protection for limestone pavements under the <b>Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981</b> . An Order, created by the relevant local government authority, prohibits the removal or damage of limestone within the designated area, after notification of its importance by English Nature, the Countryside Agency, the Countryside Council for Wales or Scottish Natural Heritage. Limestone pavements are identified as a priority habitat in Annex I of the EC Habitats and Species Directive. <a href="http://www.limestone-pavements.org.uk">http://www.limestone-pavements.org.uk</a>	Local Authorities		
Marine Nature Reserves	Marine Nature Reserves (MNRs) are established under the <b>Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (amended 1985)</b> for England, Scotland and Wales. In Northern Ireland they are designated under the <b>Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (NI) Order 1985</b> . The 1981 Act (as amended) allows for the creation of bylaws to aid the management of these sites. The purpose of MNRs is to conserve marine flora and fauna and geological features of special interest, while providing opportunities for study of marine systems. They are the mechanism for the protection of subtidal areas. Their designation involves consultation with statutory and voluntary bodies and interest groups. The largest MNR is Strangford Lough in Northern Ireland. While there are no statutory MNRs in Scotland a 'Voluntary Marine Reserve' has been	Statutory Country Nature Conservation Agencies	3	21,275

Designation	Description	Established by	No in UK	Total area (ha)
	established to perform a similar function in relation to 8 km of the Berwickshire coast.			
National Nature Reserves (NNRs)	<p>National Nature Reserves are declared by the statutory country conservation agencies under section 19 of the <b>National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949</b> or section 35 of the <b>Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981</b>. NNRs contain examples of some of the most important natural and semi-natural eco-systems in Great Britain. They are managed to conserve their habitats or to provide special opportunities for scientific study of the habitats communities and species represented within them.</p> <p>In Northern Ireland, Nature Reserves are designated under the <b>Amenity Lands Act (Northern Ireland) 1965</b>.</p>	Statutory Country Nature Conservation Agencies	395	245,065
Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) (in England, Scotland and Wales)/ Local Authority Nature Reserves (LANRs) (in Northern Ireland)	Section 21 of the <b>National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949</b> enables the designation of Local Nature Reserves by local authorities and some town or parish councils, after consultation with the relevant statutory agency. Under this Act, local authorities, after consulting with the statutory agencies, have the power to issue bylaws to protect their LNRs. Under the Town and Country Planning system there is a "presumption against development" which offers these sites at least minimal protection.	Local Authorities	780	45,367
National Parks  Data as of December 2002 with designation of Cairngorms National Park.	<p>The <b>National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949</b> established the National Park designation. In addition, the <b>Environment Act 1995</b> (full text of the act can be found at <a href="http://www.hmso.gov.uk/si/si1996/Uksi_19960186_en_1.htm">http://www.hmso.gov.uk/si/si1996/Uksi_19960186_en_1.htm</a>) also requires relevant authorities to have regard for nature conservation.</p> <p>In England and Wales, the purpose of National Parks is to conserve and enhance landscapes within the countryside whilst promoting public enjoyment of them and having regard for the social and economic well being of those living within them. Special acts of Parliament may be used to establish statutory authorities for their management. For example, the Broads Authority was set up through the <b>Norfolk and Suffolk Broads Act 1988</b>. Information with regard to National Park Authorities in the UK and useful national park links may be found at the following address. <a href="http://www.mylinkspage.com/natpark.html">Http://www.mylinkspage.com/natpark.html</a></p> <p>The recent <b>National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000</b> enables the establishment of National Parks in Scotland. In addition to the two purposes described above, National Parks in Scotland are being</p>	Countryside Agency / Countryside Council for Wales / Scottish Executive	13	1,974,756

Designation	Description	Established by	No in UK	Total area (ha)
	<p>designated to promote the sustainable use of the natural resources of the area and the sustainable social and economic development of its communities. These purposes have equal weight and are to be pursued collectively unless conservation interests are threatened.</p> <p>The Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park was designated in April 2002. The Cairngorms National Park was designated in January 2003; it is the UK's largest national park.</p>			
Natural Heritage Areas (in Scotland)	<p>Natural Heritage Areas are intended to be special large discrete areas of the countryside of outstanding natural heritage value containing a wide range of nature conservation and landscape interests where integrated management will be encouraged taking account of recreational use and wider socio-economic activities. Powers to designate NHAs are set out in the <b>Natural Heritage (Scotland) Act 1991</b> (<a href="http://www.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts1991/Ukpga_19910028_en_1.htm">http://www.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts1991/Ukpga_19910028_en_1.htm</a>). None have been designated.</p>	Scottish Ministers	None	None
Ramsar sites	<p>Ramsar sites are classified to meet the UK's commitments under <b>The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat</b>. All but a few sites are protected by the SSSI / ASSI or SPA designation. Ramsar policy statements for England and Wales may be found respectively at:</p> <p><a href="http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/ewd/ewd10.htm">http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/ewd/ewd10.htm</a> ;  <a href="http://www.ramsar.org/wurc_policy_uk_wales.htm">http://www.ramsar.org/wurc_policy_uk_wales.htm</a></p>	UK Government	144	758,822
Ramsar sites in UK Overseas Territories / Crown Dependencies	<p>Ramsar sites are classified to meet the UK's commitments under <b>The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat</b>.</p>	UK Government / Governments of Overseas Territories / Crown Dependencies	14	103,440
Regional Parks (in Scotland)	<p>Regional Parks are extensive areas of the countryside where existing land uses continue but are managed by agreement with the landowners to also allow for public access and informal recreation and to protect local landscapes. Local Authority proposals for the establishment of Regional Parks are designated upon the confirmation by Scottish Ministers under Section 48A of the <b>Wildlife and Countryside (Scotland) Act 1981</b>.</p>	Scottish Ministers	4	86,160 ha in Scotland
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (England, Scotland and	<p>The Site of Special Scientific Importance (SSSI) / Area of Special Scientific Importance (ASSI) series has been developed over the last</p>	Statutory Country Nature	6,565	2,286,113

Designation	Description	Established by	No in UK	Total area (ha)
Wales)	<p>50 years to protect the wide range of semi-natural ecosystems which exist in the UK, including virtually all of the best examples. The series also includes sites of national importance for their Earth science importance.</p> <p>Originally notified under the <b>National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949</b>, SSSIs have been renotified under the <b>Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (amended 1985)</b> which provides the legislation underpinning wildlife protection in England, Scotland and Wales.</p> <p>The <b>Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW)</b>, which applies in England and Wales only, builds on the legislative framework set out in the Wildlife and Countryside Act. The protection of SSSIs is strengthened giving greater power to English Nature and the Countryside Council for Wales to enter into management agreements, to refuse consent for damaging operations, and to take action where damage is being caused through neglect or inappropriate management. For details on implementation of the Act in England please see: <a href="http://www.defra.gov.uk">http://www.defra.gov.uk</a> . For details on implementation in Wales please see: <a href="http://www.wales.gov.uk">http://www.wales.gov.uk</a>. The full text of the Act can be found at: <a href="http://www.hmsso.gov.uk/acts/acts2000/20000037.htm">http://www.hmsso.gov.uk/acts/acts2000/20000037.htm</a> . In Scotland a draft Bill – The Nature Conservation (Scotland) Bill was put out to consultation on 11 March 2003. The Bill aims to implement proposals in the policy statement <i>The Nature of Scotland (2001)</i>.</p>	Conservation Agencies		
Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI) (Northern Ireland)	<p>ASSIs are areas notified as being of special interest under the <b>Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (Northern Ireland) 1985</b>, which is the enabling legislation for Northern Ireland, through which ASSIs are designated and protected. The full text of the Act may be found at the following address. <a href="http://www.hmsso.gov.uk/si/si1995/Uksi_19950761_en_1.htm">http://www.hmsso.gov.uk/si/si1995/Uksi_19950761_en_1.htm</a></p> <p>An ASSI Bill (broadly comparable to the SSSI provisions in the CRoW Act) is currently being considered by the Northern Ireland Assembly.</p>	Environment and Heritage Service	196	91,601
Sites of Special Interest (SSI) (Jersey)	<p>Sites of Special Interest (SSI) are sites of local and national importance containing important botanical and/or zoological populations. Sites are diverse in nature, ranging from dune to woodland and maritime heathland. These SSIs are protected under Article 9a of <b>Island Planning (Jersey) Law 1964 (Amended)</b>, <a href="http://www.jerseylegalinfo.je/Law/LawsInForce/byAlpha/i/default.asp?U">http://www.jerseylegalinfo.je/Law/LawsInForce/byAlpha/i/default.asp?U</a></p>	Sites Administered and managed by the Island (Jersey) Government.	3	275.53



Designation	Description	Established by	No in UK	Total area (ha)
	<a href="#">RL=28-1964.htm</a> . Sites with protected species are protected under the <b>Conservation of Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2000 (as amended)</b> <a href="http://www.jerseylegalinfo.je/Law/LawsInForce/byAlpha/i/default.asp?URL=6-2000.htm">http://www.jerseylegalinfo.je/Law/LawsInForce/byAlpha/i/default.asp?URL=6-2000.htm</a>			
Proposed Site of Special Interest (SSI ) (Jersey)	Sites are currently owned by various organisations and are protected under the <b>Conservation of Wildlife (Jersey) Law 2000</b> but are not protected by Island Planning Law (Jersey) 1964 (Amended).	Sites Administered and managed by the Island (Jersey) Government, National Trust for Jersey and private land owners.	<b>10</b>	<b>212.35</b>
candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC) and Special Protection Areas	<p>Natura 2000 is the European Union-wide network of nature conservation sites to be established under the Council Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (92/43/EEC) -'The Habitats Directive'</p> <p>Natura 2000 will comprise Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) classified under the Council Directive on the conservation of wild birds (79/409/EEC) -'The EC Wild Birds Directive' ..</p> <p>The provisions of the Habitats Directive are transposed into national legislation by means of the <b>Conservation (Natural Habitats &amp;c.) Regulations 1994</b> for England also amended by the <b>Conservation (Natural Habitats &amp;c.) (amendment) (England) Regulations 2000</b>, Scotland and Wales as amended by the <b>Conservation (Natural Habitats &amp;c.) (Amendment) Regulations 1997</b>. The Regulations can be found at: <a href="http://www.hmsso.gov.uk/si/si1994/Uksi_19942716_en_2.htm">http://www.hmsso.gov.uk/si/si1994/Uksi_19942716_en_2.htm</a> and the amendment can be found at <a href="http://www.hmsso.gov.uk/si/si2000/20000192.htm">http://www.hmsso.gov.uk/si/si2000/20000192.htm</a> and <a href="http://www.hmsso.gov.uk/si/si1997/97305501.htm">http://www.hmsso.gov.uk/si/si1997/97305501.htm</a>.</p> <p>The <b>Conservation (Natural Habitat, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995</b> came into force on 13 November 1995 and replicate the provisions in force in the GB Regulations by applying them to the separate legal system that exists in Northern Ireland. The full text of the Regulations may be found at: <a href="http://www.hmsso.gov.uk/sr/sr1995/Nisr_19950380_en_2.htm">http://www.hmsso.gov.uk/sr/sr1995/Nisr_19950380_en_2.htm</a></p> <p>A full list of SPAs and cSACs can be found at: <a href="http://www.jncc.gov.uk/idt/default.htm">http://www.jncc.gov.uk/idt/default.htm</a></p>	UK Government	<b>cSACs:</b> <b>567</b>  <b>SPAs:</b> <b>234</b>	<b>cSACs:</b> <b>2,359,066</b>  <b>SPAs:</b> <b>1,311,58</b>

Designation	Description	Established by	No in UK	Total area (ha)
	<p>The <i>Handbook on the UK status of EC Habitats Directive interest features: provisional data on the UK distribution and extent of Annex I habitats and the UK distribution and population size of Annex II species</i> provides an overview of current knowledge on certain aspects of the conservation status of the habitats (in terms of range and extent) and species (in terms of distribution and estimated population size) listed on Annexes I and II of the EC Habitats Directive, which occur in the UK. Details can be found at the JNCC website.  <a href="http://www.jncc.gov.uk/publications/jncc312/introduction.htm">http://www.jncc.gov.uk/publications/jncc312/introduction.htm</a>.</p>			

## Appendix 2. Other natural heritage conservation designations in the UK

All numbers and areas as of 31 March 2002 unless otherwise stated.

Designation	Description	Established by	No in UK	Total area (ha)
Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLVs) in Scotland	The requirement to designate AGLVs is set out in <b>SDD Circular 2/1962</b> . They are defined by local authorities in development plans with a view to safeguarding areas of regional or local landscape importance from inappropriate developments. A number of other regional and local landscape designations are also used by local authorities in Scotland, including Regional Scenic Area.	Local authorities	<b>Data not available</b>	<b>Data not available</b>
Biogenetic Reserves Network	Biogenetic reserves act as 'living laboratories' and are representative examples of various types of natural environment in Europe. They can consist of natural or semi-natural habitats and their selection is based on their value for nature conservation and protected status based on four criteria: 'typical', 'unique', 'rare' and/or 'endangered' which can be applied to habitats or species. The protected status must be adequate to ensure the conservation or management of the sites in the long term in accordance with fixed objectives. Information, including criteria for Biogenetic Reserves, can be found at <a href="http://ims.wcmc.org.uk/IPIECA2/conven/conven_biogen.html">http://ims.wcmc.org.uk/IPIECA2/conven/conven_biogen.html</a>	UK Government / Council of Europe	<b>18</b>	<b>79 sq km</b>
Biosphere Reserves	Biosphere Reserves are areas of terrestrial and coastal ecosystems promoting the conservation of biodiversity with sustainable use. Biosphere reserves serve to demonstrate integrated management of land, water and biodiversity. More information on Biosphere reserves can be found at <a href="http://www.ukmab.org/">http://www.ukmab.org/</a> .	UK Government / UNESCO	<b>9</b>	<b>43,505 sq km</b>
European Diploma Site (Category A)	The European Diploma is an award established by the Council of Europe under <b>Regulation (65) 6 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe of 6 March 1965</b> for certain landscapes, reserves and protected national features, and <b>Resolution (73) 4 of 19 January 1973 on the Regulations for the European Diploma (amended and revised by Resolution (88) 39 of 5 December 1988, (89) 12 of 19 June 1989 and (91) 16 of 17 June 1989)</b> .  By awarding the European Diploma, the Council of Europe recognises that the area is of particular European interest for natural-heritage and that the area is properly protected. The Diploma can be awarded to national parks, nature reserves or natural areas, sites or features. The award is for a five-year period. Annual reports are required for each area, and the renewal of the award at 5 years is only made after	UK Government / Council of Europe	<b>2</b>	<b>56 sq km</b>
European Diploma Site (Category C)		UK Government / Council of Europe	<b>3</b>	<b>2112 sq km</b>

Designation	Description	Established by	No in UK	Total area (ha)
	independent assessment of the site. The Diploma can be withdrawn at any time if the area comes under threat or suffers serious damage.			
Geological Conservation Review sites (England, Scotland, Wales) Earth Science Conservation Review Sites (Northern Ireland)	Geological Conservation Review (GCR) and Earth Science Conservation Review (ESCR) sites are non-statutory sites identified by the statutory nature conservation agencies as having national or international importance for earth science conservation on the basis of their geology, palaeontology, mineralogy or geomorphology. Although GCR/ESCR identification does not itself give any statutory protection, many GCR/ESCR sites have been notified as SSSIs/ASSIs.	Statutory Country Nature Conservation Agencies	<b>GCR 3,139</b> <b>ESCR 350</b>	Data not available
Heritage Coasts (in England and Wales)	A heritage coast is a section of coast exceeding one mile in length that is of exceptionally fine scenic quality, substantially undeveloped and containing features of special significance and interest. The designation is agreed between local authorities and (in England) the Countryside Agency or (in Wales) the Countryside Council for Wales, as an aid to local authorities in planning and managing their coastlines.	Local government authorities/ Countryside Agency/ Countryside Council for Wales.	<b>45</b>	<b>1,553</b>
Marine Consultation Areas (in Scotland)	Marine Consultation Areas are identified by Scottish Natural Heritage as deserving particular distinction in respect of the quality and sensitivity of the marine environment within them. Their selection encourages coastal communities and management bodies to be aware of marine conservation issues in the area.	Scottish Natural Heritage	29	111,895 ha
National Scenic Areas (in Scotland)	National Scenic Areas (NSAs) are designated by Scottish Ministers as the best of Scotland's landscapes, deserving special protection in the nation's interest. Special development control measures for the 40 National Scenic Areas in Scotland were introduced by the Scottish Development Department through <b>SDD Circular No 20/1980</b> . National Planning policy for NSAs is set out in NPPG14 on Natural Heritage.	Scottish Ministers	<b>40</b>	<b>1,001,800</b>
National Trust / National Trust for Scotland properties	The National Trust and the National Trust for Scotland are independent charities that together own or have protective covenants land of scenic value in the UK. Under the <b>National Trust Act (1907)</b> and the <b>National Trust for Scotland Order Confirmation Acts 1935 and 1938</b> their holdings are inalienable and cannot be sold or mortgaged. Both National Trusts have the power to create by-laws relating to access and management of land. For more information please see <a href="http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk">http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk</a>	The National Trust / The National Trust for Scotland	55 properties in Scotland	73,372 ha in Scotland
NGO Reserves	A variety of Non Governmental Organisations such as the John Muir Trust, Plantlife, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the County Wildlife Trusts and Woodland Trust own or manage reserves. Sites	NGOs	Data not available	Data not available

Designation	Description	Established by	No in UK	Total area (ha)
	protect and manage the habitats of important species of birds and other biodiversity. These reserves of themselves have no statutory basis, but a large number are also SSSIs / NNRs / SPAs / cSACs / Ramsar sites etc.			
Sensitive Marine Areas (in England)	Sensitive Marine Areas (SMAs) are non-statutory marine areas notable for their marine animal and plant communities or which provide ecological support to adjacent statutory sites. A further aim is to raise awareness and disseminate information to be taken into account in estuarine and coastal management planning. These areas rely on the co-operation of users and local communities for sustainable management.	English Nature	27	Data not available
Wildlife Sites	Local authorities for any given area may designate certain areas as being of local conservation interest. The criteria for inclusion, and the level of protection provided, if any, may vary between areas. Most individual counties have a similar scheme, although they do vary.  These designated sites, together with statutory designations, are defined in local and structure plans under the Town and Country Planning system and are a material consideration when planning applications are being determined.	Local government authorities	<b>43,500</b>	<b>500,000</b>
Woodland Parks / Forest Parks	Woodland Parks are similar to Forest Parks but are smaller in scale and located near to centres of population. Forest Parks, Forest Nature Reserves or Woodland Parks are identified and managed by the Forestry Commission primarily for recreation purposes.	Forestry Commission	Data not available	Data not available
World Heritage Sites	Natural heritage properties are defined in accordance with Article 2 of the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (The World Heritage Convention). All sites in the UK are existing Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), and most are also National Nature Reserves (NNRs). Information on World Heritage Sites in the UK can be found at the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) website <a href="http://wcpa.iucn.org">http://wcpa.iucn.org</a> The figures on the right include sites designated for earth science or cultural heritage features, but excludes sites in the UK Overseas Territories.	UK Government / World Heritage Committee	<b>3</b>	<b>9sq km</b>

### Appendix 3. Initiatives which support Protected Areas

Initiative	Description	Established by
Capital Tax Heritage Relief	Owners of heritage property of national importance may apply to Inland Revenue Capital Taxes for capital tax relief on the property concerned and/or for consent to set capital aside for the benefit of such property in a Maintenance Fund. In return for this owners are expected to enter into Undertakings with the tax authority in respect of the property's ongoing heritage management and the provision of reasonable public access. Statutory Agencies are consulted by Inland Revenue Capital Taxes about whether properties meet requirements of the Finance Acts, the terms of any management Undertakings, and over the conduct of 5 yearly heritage management reviews. For more information see <a href="http://www.cto.eds.co.uk">http://www.cto.eds.co.uk</a> .	Inland Revenue Capital Taxes
Countryside Management Scheme	The Countryside Management Scheme offers farmers in areas outside of ESAs in Northern Ireland payments to increase the biodiversity of habitats, improve water quality, enhance the landscape and protect heritage by integrating good farming practice with care and protection of the countryside. The Countryside Management Scheme is broadly similar to the ESA Scheme by offering a 'whole farm' scheme requiring all participants to comply with Good Farming Practice and a series of basic environmental prescriptions. Participants will also be required to follow specific management prescriptions for the habitats and features present, develop and follow a nutrient management plan for the whole farm and attend a training programme designed to develop the land owners skills which should aid them in the management of their habitats.	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Northern Ireland
Countryside Stewardship	The Countryside Stewardship Scheme is the Government's main scheme for the wider countryside in England, which aims, through the payment of grants, to improve the natural beauty and diversity of the countryside, enhance, restore and recreate targeted landscapes, their wildlife habitats and historical features, and to improve opportunities for public access. It operates outside Environmentally Sensitive Areas. A booklet describing the aims of the Countryside Stewardship Scheme is available in PDF format. A booklet describing the New arable options that are now available under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme can also be downloaded in PDF format. See <a href="http://www.defra.gov.uk">http://www.defra.gov.uk</a> for more details.  Farmers and land managers enter 10-year agreements to manage land in an environmentally beneficial way in return for annual payments. Grants are also available towards capital works such as hedge laying and planting, repairing dry stone walls, etc.	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Environmental Impact Assessment / Strategic Environmental Assessment	In the UK planning system, the role of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) is to identify developments that are likely to have significant effects on the environment. The requirement for an EIA is triggered by the type and size of development. Generally, there are <i>de minimus</i> levels of development where an EIA is not normally required (though in these cases environmental issues may still be a material factor in any decision). In sensitive locations, including in or near all Natura 2000 or Ramsar sites, these thresholds do not apply and all development proposals	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister / National Assembly for Wales / Scottish Executive / Department of Environment Northern

Initiative	Description	Established by
	<p>are screened. Any proposal which may have a significant effect will then be subject to a full EIA.</p> <p>UK Government policy is to incorporate environmental considerations into decision-making at all levels. Local authorities are required to carry out an environmental appraisal of their development plans (land use plans at county and local levels). The statutory conservation agencies are consultees both for strategic plans and for individual local developments which may impact on conservation sites.</p> <p>In addition, all legislative proposals are subjected to a Regulatory Impact Assessment which forms part of the draft legislative package. The assessment provides a comprehensive evaluation of the implications, costs and benefits of the proposal. Legislative proposals are also required to be subject to environmental appraisal.</p> <p>In common with other European Union States, the UK will be implementing the 'strategic environmental assessment' or SEA Directive (2001/42/EC). The Directive will require a formal environmental assessment of plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.</p>	Ireland
Environmentally Sensitive Areas	<p>ESAs are designated under the <b>Agriculture Act 1986</b> which requires ministers to seek a reasonable balance between the interests of agriculture, the economic and social needs of rural areas and conservation and recreation. The areas have specific environmental objectives which are required under EC regulations on Agricultural Structures. The ESAs scheme aims to maintain and often to enhance the conservation, landscape and historical value of the key environmental features of an area, and, where possible, improve public access to these areas.</p> <p>Farmer managed ESAs include some of our most important landscapes - upland: wetland; moor; coastal marsh; river valleys, which offer protection for some of the UK's rarest plants and establish a suitable environment for the recovery of native species (such as brown hare, otter, and water vole). After signing up to a 10-year management agreement with the Department, farmers receive an annual payment on each hectare of land entered into the scheme. A five-year termination clause is available to the agreement holder and the Department.</p> <p>Each ESA has one or more tiers of entry and each tier requires different agricultural practices to be followed. Typically, higher tiers have higher payment rates than the base tier, but impose more conditions on farmers and achieve greater environmental benefits.</p>	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs / National Assembly for Wales / Scottish Executive / Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Northern Ireland
Ex-situ conservation initiatives	The UK holds a number of collections of international importance at institutions such as the Natural History Museum and the Royal Botanical Gardens in Kew and Edinburgh. The UK is also involved in a number of ex-situ projects. For example, the UK Flora Programme of the Millennium Seed Bank Project has already collected seeds from around 90% of the UK's native higher plants.	Not applicable
Natural Care	Natural Care was developed by Scottish Natural Heritage in response to the Scottish Executive's ' <i>Nature of Scotland</i> ' proposals, and launched by Scottish Ministers In October 2001. The Scheme complements funding packages run by the Forestry Commission and Environment and Rural Affairs Department (SEERAD) and aims to provide supplementary funding to secure the	Scottish Natural Heritage

Initiative	Description	Established by
	<p>assured positive management of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Natura 2000 sites.</p> <p>Different Schemes, under the Natural Care banner, are developed with the relevant SSSI and Natura site owners and managers - to provide locally tailored answers to locally identified needs. In circumstances where a standard schemes is not appropriate, individual management agreements can be entered into. More information about Natural Care Schemes is available at <a href="http://www.snh.org.uk/about/ab-pa08.htm">http://www.snh.org.uk/about/ab-pa08.htm</a></p>	
Nitrate vulnerable zones	<p>The <b>EC Directive Concerning the Protection of Waters Against Pollution Caused by Nitrates from Agricultural Sources (91/676/EEC)</b> requires member states to designate, as Nitrate Vulnerable Zones, surface or underground waters that are or could be high in nitrate from agricultural sources. Within these zones farmers must observe an action programme of measures restricting the timing and application of fertilisers and manures and must keep accurate records. Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) have been designated in England and Wales since December 1998 to reduce the risk of agricultural nitrate pollution.</p>	<p>Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs / National Assembly for Wales / Scottish Executive / Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Northern Ireland</p>
Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS)	<p>The Strategy establishes an international framework for co-operation for consolidating and extending existing schemes and programmes in the conservation field. Endorsed at the third Pan-European Conference of Ministers of the Environment "Environment for Europe" held in Sofia in October 1995, it was adopted by 54 countries of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. The Strategy addresses all biological and landscape initiatives under one European approach and promotes the integration of biological and landscape diversity considerations into social and economic sectors. It aims to increase public involvement and mechanisms will be developed as appropriate through the Strategy's five-year Action Plans. Further information about the Strategy can be accessed at: <a href="http://www.strategyguide.org/">http://www.strategyguide.org/</a></p>	<p>Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs</p>
Planning policy	<p>The main guidance on nature conservation in a land use and planning context is contained in the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• England: Planning Policy Guidance Note No. 9 (PPG9), Habitats Regulations Guidance Notes, Minerals Planning Guidance Note 13 and MPG14 Environment Act 1995: Review of mineral planning permissions.</li> <li>• Scotland: National Planning Policy Guideline 14: Natural Heritage (NPPG14), Planning Advice Note 60 Planning for Natural Heritage (PAN60) and National Planning Policy Guideline 4: Land for mineral working in Scotland.</li> <li>• Wales: Planning Guidance (Wales) Planning Policy and Technical Advice Note 5 'Nature Conservation and Planning' and Minerals Planning Policy Wales</li> <li>• Northern Ireland: Planning Policy Statement 2 (PPS2), Planning and Nature Conservation (1997)</li> </ul> <p>Each of the nature conservation agencies works closely with their sponsoring territorial department to provide advice on planning guidance and implementation of planning policy. In addition, they also work closely with, and provide advice to, the planning authorities on policies to be included in emerging development plans at all levels. Guidance notes on the</p>	<p>Office of the Deputy Prime Minister / National Assembly for Wales / Scottish Executive / Department of Environment Northern Ireland</p>



Initiative	Description	Established by
	implementation of the Directive have been developed for internal staff, and training courses and seminars have been run for a range of professionals outside the agencies, including the staff of Local Authority Planning and Roads Departments, Forestry Commission, Water Authorities, etc.	
Rural Stewardship Scheme	Launched in Scotland in 2001, the Rural Stewardship Scheme has been designed to ensure that all types of farm or croft have an opportunity to gain access to the funding available. The scheme has more than 30 management options to reflect all types of conditions to be found on Scottish farms and crofts, and aims to deliver a wide range of conservation benefits, with many options focussing on safeguarding and enhancing endangered species and biodiversity. The Scheme takes account of sites which are subject to national or international designation. For further information see <a href="http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library3/agri/rss-00.asp">http://www.scotland.gov.uk/library3/agri/rss-00.asp</a>	Scottish Executive
Tir Gofal	Tir Gofal is a whole farm agri-environment scheme that has been available in three pilot projects since April 1999. The Scheme aims to encourage agricultural practices that will protect and enhance the landscapes of Wales, their cultural features and associated wildlife and enhance public access. Entry into an agreement is voluntary and the costs are partly met by the EC under the provisions of the Common Agricultural Policy. The delivery of Tir Gofal contributes to the UK Biodiversity Action Plan targets as well as providing a practical demonstration of the principles of sustainable development. Tir Gofal incorporates agreements made under its precursor, Tir Cymen, which started in 1992 and closed to new applicants in October. As Tir Cymen agreements which are still running come to an end farmers are encouraged to apply for Tir Gofal.	Countryside Council for Wales / National Assembly for Wales
Woodland Grant Scheme	The Woodland Grant Scheme (WGS) in Scotland, England and Wales provides support for the costs of establishing or managing woodlands to produce public benefits including biodiversity. The grants are targeted to address priorities identified in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan such as native woodland expansion, conservation and restoration or improving habitats for priority species. Many of these occur in protected areas. These incentive schemes are currently being revised in each country. The new Scottish Forestry Grant Scheme from April 2003 will include provision for a higher rate of support for protected areas compared to other sites. For more information see: <a href="http://www.defra.gov.uk/erdp/schemes/landbased/wgs/wgsindex.htm">http://www.defra.gov.uk/erdp/schemes/landbased/wgs/wgsindex.htm</a> and <a href="http://www.forestry.gov.uk/">http://www.forestry.gov.uk/</a>	Forestry Commission / Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Northern Ireland (Forest Service)