

# UK experiences of reporting under the EU Habitats and Birds Directives

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# Article 17 - UK experiences/approach

- Coordination of your country report – considerations
- UK governance structure
- Developing country specific guidance
- The ‘pilot’ phase
- Specific considerations
  - P & T / CMs
  - Defining population units
  - Structure and functions parameter
  - Habitat for the species parameter
  - Favourable Reference Values
- Key messages

# Context: UK is a federal country



Also separate environment Ministries in each country as part of devolved government



# Background

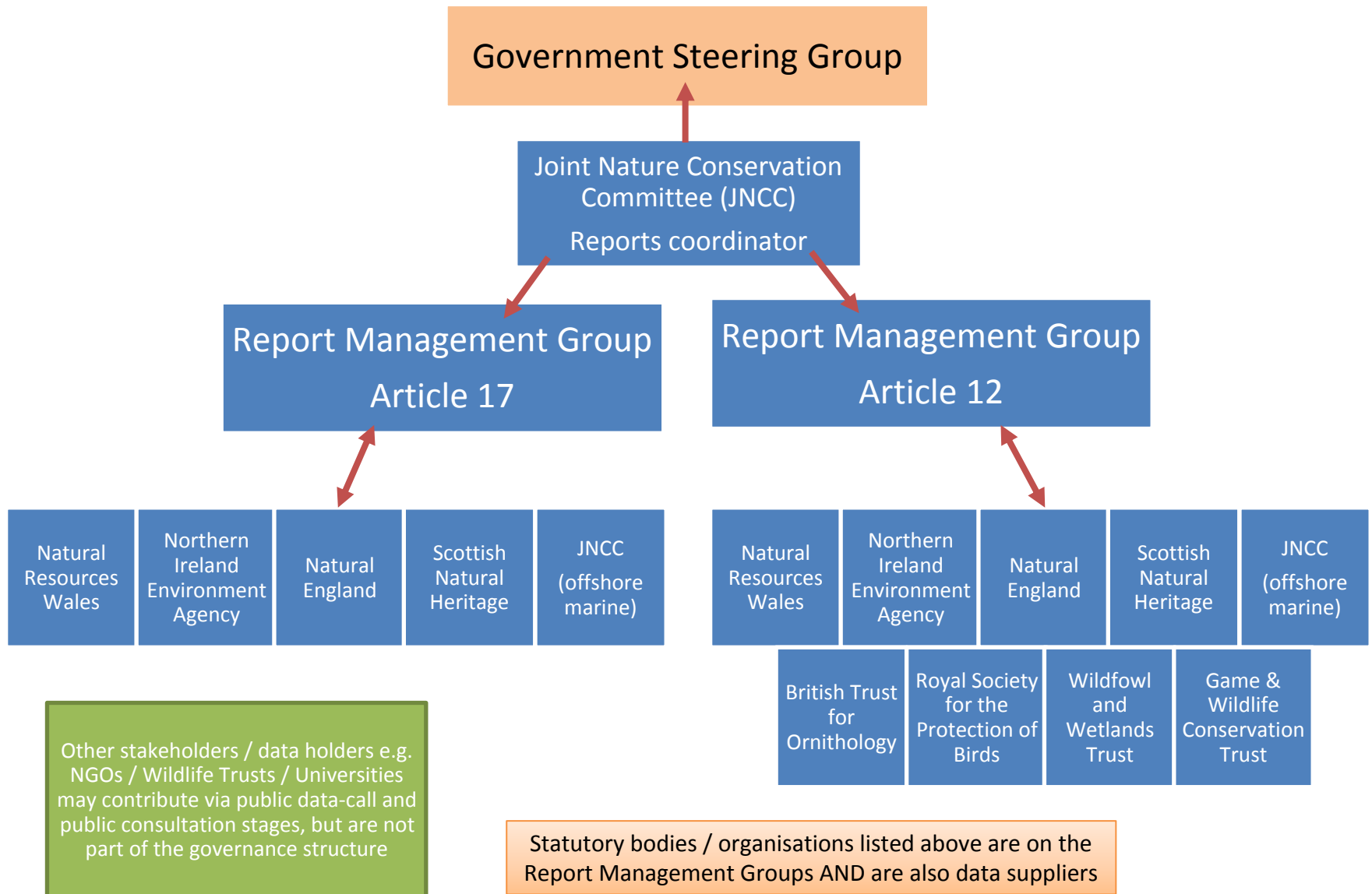
## Article 17

Most data held at country scale by country agencies – report involves collation and UK synthesis from multiple sources

## Article 12

Most data held at UK scale by NGO partners – report involves simple collation from partner databases

# UK governance structure



# Coordination of a national report is critical

- **What is ‘your’ national context?**
  - Who ‘leads’ on the report?
  - Who holds the data?
  - Accessibility – rights to data
  - Scale of the data - implications
  - Creation of a functional coordinating structure
  - Collaboration/coordination
- **UK context**
  - The Article 17 and Article 12 ‘Report Management Groups’
  - Overall governance / ownership (government)
  - Data collection and collation
  - Country/offshore level reports
  - Aggregation at ‘UK scale’ per feature



# Developing UK specific guidance

## Why?

- Stresses key elements of EU guidance within data fields; with added UK interpretation – clearer
- Ensures consistent UK approach across four countries and offshore marine
- Gives additional technical guidance e.g. how to assess Structure & Functions in UK context.

## Who and what for?

- Habitat and species specialists
- Country/offshore agency leads
- Reporting phase – completing reports
- Aggregation phase – UK assessment / QA
- Consultation phase – explaining approach / documenting rationale of results / QA

**Supplementary UK guidance to be used when undertaking the 'Article 17 reporting' of UK habitat types listed under Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora**

**FOR USE BY STATUTORY NATURE CONSERVATION BODY STAFF UNDERTAKING THE TERRESTRIAL AND MARINE ARTICLE 17 REPORTING ON UK HABITAT TYPES**

7 Main pressures and threats		UK specific guidance
For more information on this section please see pages 74 - 77 of the EU's Explanatory Notes and Guidelines. Additional definitions can be found on pages 175 - 177 of the EU's Explanatory Notes and Guidelines.		All SNCRs to complete the fields under Section 2, Main pressures and threats. The fields can be found within the 'pressures_and_threats' tab of the habitat data capture pro-forma.
7.1 Characterisation of pressures/threats		
a) Pressures/threat	b) Ranking of pressure/threat Indicate whether the pressure/threat is of: H a high importance (maximum 5 points for pressures and 3 for threats) M a medium importance	Use the newly revised list of pressures/threats in the 2019 Reference period <a href="https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/habitats.4517">https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/habitats.4517</a> . Answer 2 (b)(b)(ii) summarises the categories on the pressures and threats list. Only up to 10 pressures and 10 threats can be recorded, with a maximum of five high-level pressures and five high-level threats. Low level pressures/threats are no longer recorded. Refer to pressures and threats reported in the last reporting round for reference, as reported period (2017-2018) and they have an impact on the long-term viability of the habitats; those are (b)(b)(iii) assessable impacts (within the long term viability of the habitat). If there is uncertainty about which code to pick for a particular pressure/threat, SNCRs should focus on the amongst themselves. Each SNCR to provide a list of up to 10 pressures and 10 threats ranked High and Medium, with a maximum of 5 pressures and 5 threats ranked High. Select the pressure / threat name and code and map it into agricultural land (excluding) and other land (excluding) Reporting for January (92) and February (93) as reported in a...

**Supplementary UK guidance to be used when undertaking the 'Article 17 reporting' of UK species listed under Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora**

**FOR USE BY STATUTORY NATURE CONSERVATION BODY STAFF UNDERTAKING THE TERRESTRIAL AND MARINE ARTICLE 17 REPORTING ON UK SPECIES**

**FINAL guidance for use with the UK species assessments under Annex II/JNCC, January 2018**





# Initial 'pilot' phase

- **Country level pilots for testing**
  - reporting approach and UK-level guidance (adapted from EU guidance)
  - reporting template
  - data aggregation approach for UK-level assessment
- **Four pilot assessments undertaken**
  - Narrow-mouthed Whorl Snail *Vertigo angustior*
  - Harbour Porpoise *Phocoena phocoena*
  - Species-rich *Nardus* grassland
  - Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time



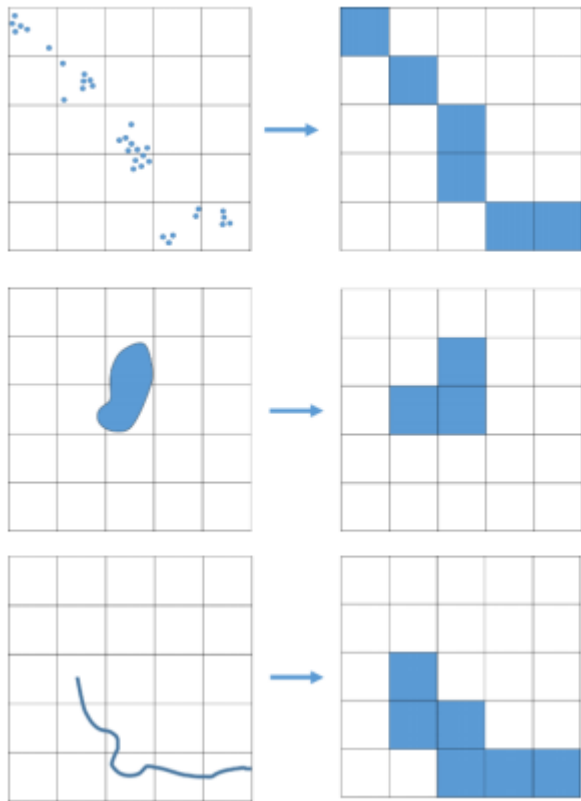
# Some challenging reporting parameters

1. Pressures and Threats
2. Population units and conversion to EU population units
3. Assessing habitat for species
4. Assessing Structure and Functions
5. Favourable Reference Values

# Pressures & Threats / Conservation measures

- The need to aggregate five country lists into one UK list!
- Each country will report, as an example
  - up to 10 Pressures and 10 Threats per feature
  - with up to five high level Pressures and five high level Threats
- Use aggregation rules (weighting by proportion of habitat area / population size per country) to create UK list (with not more than 10 overall P/T)

# Defining population units



- Population units
  - UK level data
  - Comparison to Favourable Reference Population
- Specialist Working Groups
- Conversion to EU units
- Cross-boundary issues

# Assessing Structure and Functions

6 Structure and functions			
6.1 Condition of habitat	a) Area in good condition	Minimum	<i>In km<sup>2</sup></i>
		Maximum	<i>In km<sup>2</sup></i>
	b) Area in not-good condition	Minimum	<i>In km<sup>2</sup></i>
		Maximum	<i>In km<sup>2</sup></i>
	c) Area where condition is not known	Minimum	<i>In km<sup>2</sup></i>
		Maximum	<i>In km<sup>2</sup></i>

## Need to consider:

- What monitoring results (in which monitoring categories) in each country and in offshore marine areas equate to area in 'good' and 'not good' condition to ensure UK aggregated result is meaningful. Agreed consistent approach needed
- How to determine what area of habitat to report in unknown condition consistently.
  - Need to consider how representative is available monitoring information for the whole resource
- UK guidance developed to ensure UK aggregation works!

# Habitat for the species

7 Habitat for the species	
7.1 Sufficiency of area and quality of occupied habitat	<p>a) Are area and quality of <u>occupied</u> habitat sufficient (for long-term survival)? YES/NO/Unknown</p> <p>b) If NO, is there a sufficiently large area of <u>unoccupied</u> habitat of suitable quality (for long-term survival)? YES/NO/Unknown</p>

UK  
interpretation

7.1 Sufficiency of area and quality of occupied habitat	<p>a) Are area and quality of <u>occupied</u> habitat sufficient (to maintain the species at FCS)? YES/NO/Unknown</p> <p>b) If NO, is there a sufficiently large area of <u>occupied AND unoccupied</u> habitat of suitable quality (to maintain the species at FCS)? YES/NO/Unknown</p>
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- When considering the EU guidance, UK decided to ask Q7.1b slightly differently, to consider both the occupied and unoccupied habitat together which seemed more intuitive
- Needed to ensure each country species specialist undertook parameter assessments consistently, taking account of both area **and** quality
- UK guidance developed to ensure UK aggregation works!



# Favourable Reference Values

- FRR established for,
  - Range (FRR)
  - Area (FRA) (habitats only)
  - Population (FRP) (species only)
- Consistency issues across different reporting periods

## Favourable Reference Range (FRR):

Natterjack Toad *Bufo calamita*

FRR (est. 2007; 2013):

4,100 km<sup>2</sup>

**Range 2007:** 3,694 km<sup>2</sup>

**Range 2013:** 5,096 km<sup>2</sup>

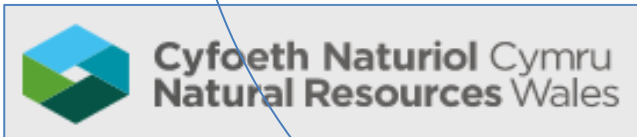
(genuine change)

**Range 2019:** ? km<sup>2</sup>



# Article 12





# UK bird surveys



# Article 12 – alignment opportunities

## Overwinter population estimates of British waterbirds

Andrew J. Musgrove, Graham E. Austin, Richard D. Hearn, Chas A. Holt, David A. Stroud and Simon R. Wotton

**Abstract** In total, over 12.5 million waterbirds occur in Britain during the winter. Estimates of the numbers of non-breeding waterbirds visiting Britain are important for the birds' conservation, both for status assessments and for the identification and designation of nationally and internationally important sites. This paper collates data from a wide range of sources, principally for the period 2004/05 to 2008/09, and produces estimates for 92 different species or populations, some using novel analytical methods developed by the authors. For 15 species or populations, formal estimates of wintering numbers are presented for the first time. The estimates demonstrate that species such as Avocet *Recurvirostra ornostrota*, Gadwall *Anas strepera* and, especially, Little Egret *Egretta garzetta* have increased substantially in the last decade, while others, such as Greenland White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons flavirostris*, Dunlin *Calidris alpina* and Common Pochard *Aythya ferina*, have declined markedly.

UK assessment of raptor numbers

Six year assessment of UK bird popn sizes

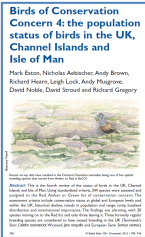
UK Article 12 report

Review of legislation?

EU submission

Birds of Conservation Concern

State of UK Birds



# Key messages and assessing risks!

- **Plan early!** Reporting generally takes longer than anticipated!
- Consider (and plan for) risks – *e.g.* ‘losing’ experienced staff during process
- Assess what monitoring information is available and at which scale(s) – how does it work in the context of A17 reporting requirements?
- Develop country-specific guidance and data capture tools as necessary to help collate the report. Relate these to EU tools

# Key messages and assessing risks!

- Think about how to aggregate data and/or how to assess representativity of available data across the whole resource
- Discuss issues with ETC/BD as they come up
- **Work with stakeholders** – ‘bring them along’ with you – critical when these hold data
- Provide clear and consistent advice to all stakeholders – create a ‘common vision’



# Key messages and assessing risks!

- Try to develop an approach that will be robust and repeatable in 6, 12 and 18 years time! Consistency across reporting periods crucial for national comparison and biogeographic region comparison over time
- Think how you can use and promote the data and information for national policy uses as well as international reporting!

# Finally!

- Plan and then do some more...
- Co-ordinate with data-holders
- Involve NGOs from the outset and work collaboratively
- Assess reporting needs across different MEAs: collect data once – report many times!
- Use reports to advance national conservation
  - Further interpretation...
  - Communication tool for engaging stakeholders
- Integrate future reporting needs into national programmes
- Consider working with other Parties on transboundary assessments