



ANNEX B

DEPENDENT TERRITORIES PROGRESS REPORT

INTRODUCTION

1 To date, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Gibraltar, Jersey and St Helena and its Dependencies have been included in the UK's ratification of the Biodiversity Convention. Their Governments have taken a number of steps to protect the biodiversity in their care.

British Virgin Islands

2 The BVI Government is moving towards comprehensive environmental legislation. In August the Chief Minister's office sponsored a meeting to address institutional building, environmental legislation, methodologies and integrated planning issues for sustainable development. It was agreed that there is a need to move towards formulating effective environmental legislation for the sustainable development of the BVI.

Cayman Islands

3 Approximately 4.7% of the land area of the three islands is now protected. This includes several properties owned by the Cayman Islands' National Trust.

4 An extensive system of marine protected areas has been in place since 1986. Programmes to monitor components of marine biodiversity include a comprehensive coral reef monitoring programme and annual assessment of both the status of the adult shallow water queen conch (*strombas gigus*) populations and the artisanal Nassau grouper (*Epinephelus striatus*) fishery. Mangrove and seagrass monitoring sites have also been established.

5 A number of the saline coastal ponds are protected as Animal Sanctuaries under the Animals Law (1976) and Regulations: Colliers Pond and Meagre Bay Pond on Grand Cayman, Salt-water Pond on Cayman Brac and the Booby Pond Little Cayman. The Booby Pond (home to one of the largest breeding colonies of red-footed boobies (*sula sula*) in the western hemisphere) has also been designated as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention. In addition, the Environmental Zone of the Marine Parks (which include 1600 acres of the environmentally critical interface between Grand Cayman's Central Mangrove Wetland and Little Sound) plus an additional parcel of Crown Land has recently been designated as an Animal Sanctuary. Following public consultation (which is currently underway) the area will also be designated as a Ramsar site. This is intended as an initial step towards securing further protection of the majority of this economically and ecologically important wetland system.

6 Single species conservation programmes taking place in the terrestrial environment include the National Trust's captive breeding programme for the endangered Grand Cayman Blue

iguana and a planned ex situ conservation programme for the threatened endemic bromelid (*Hohenbergia caymanensis*). The Trust is also currently funding a study of the Grand Cayman population of the West Indian Whistling duck to determine their habitat requirements and nutritional needs.

Gibraltar

7 Gibraltar is ecologically significant and sensitive. Its significance stems from its location on a major migration route, but it also has a very substantial flora for so small an area as well as important marine biological assets. Its sensitivity is in part because of its small area, with a high human population density, together with its vulnerability to environmental damage in neighbouring sea and land areas.

8 Much sound scientifically-based work has been carried out in Gibraltar over a number of years. It has a good, but far from comprehensive database. It has good legislation in place to protect the environment, most notably the Nature Protection Ordinance introduced in 1991. A large area of the Upper Rock is designated as a Nature Reserve. It is well protected and managed. In addition, as a territory in the European Union, Gibraltar is required to transpose relevant EU Directives. These include the Habitats Directive which Gibraltar has already implemented.

9 Gibraltar is also fortunate in having excellent human resources to back up the conservation efforts. A partnership exists between the Government and the principal Non-Government Organisation, the Gibraltar Ornithological and Natural History Society who provide expert advice on a wide range of environmental issues and has prepared a report on maintaining the biodiversity of Gibraltar.

10 Gibraltar is being considered as the location for one of the global Geographical Observatories under the programme initiative by the Royal Geographical Society. The main problem which Gibraltar faces, in common with many others, is lack of funds. Gibraltar has made strenuous efforts to obtain external funding for its biodiversity work, with limited success.

Jersey

11 A draft biodiversity strategy has been prepared for Jersey. This adopts an approach based on targets for priority species and ecosystems. These have been selected with respect to their international, British Isles and Jersey importance and the fact that their care and protection will ensure the conservation of biodiversity in Jersey. The strategy includes recommendations for the key issues affecting biodiversity in Jersey, such as policy and planning, agriculture and water supply. Certain management and monitoring tasks are already

underway and a full-time Interpretation Officer has been appointed.

St Helena

12 A local review of environmental legislation has taken place and a new ordinance is being drafted to provide for the protection of endangered, endemic and indigenous species. The St Helena Government have accepted the recommendation to adopt a Sustainable Environment and Development Strategy (SEDS) for St Helena and an Advisory Committee on the Environment (ACE) is being established to integrate conservation into national decision making.

13 In addition, the St Helena Government has undertaken the following activities:

- ┆ a habitat conservation plan has been drafted for the Peaks area. New photo and ground monitoring plots have been set up to assess the long term impact of habitat management activities in the area and conservation work has started to control the invasive weeds;
- ┆ species recovery programmes have been drafted for critically endangered species of endemic plants. The Agriculture and Fisheries Departments' Environmental Conservation Section has increased propagation of key endemic species in order to establish seed orchards and supply stock for habitat restoration work;
- ┆ an arboretum and nature trail with on site interpretation facilities has been set up;
- ┆ a number of experts have visited St Helena to advise on local plant conservation and to study the local flora subterranean invertebrates and avian fauna and subterranean aquatic fauna;
- ┆ the Government has liaised with the fledgling St Helena Conservation Group and the Heritage Society to encourage their development as conservation NGOs;
- ┆ an 18 month post has been created to focus on endemic species conservation through habitat restoration and environmental education;
- ┆ regular articles are published in the local media to raise awareness of biodiversity issues on the Island. A one day seminar on Sustainable Ecology was held in March.

ACTION IN TERRITORIES NOT YET INCLUDED IN THE UK'S RATIFICATION OF THE CONVENTION

Hong Kong

14 Two biodiversity surveys will shortly be carried out in Hong Kong: one on terrestrial and freshwater habitats, the other on corals and fishes. The surveys will provide an up to date database needed for developing a strategy for biodiversity conservation in Hong Kong. In addition the Mai Po Marshes

and Deep Inner Bay has recently been listed as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.

Falkland Islands

15 The Attorney General in the Falkland Islands is giving priority to a revision of environmental legislation in 1995. The new legislation should be in place by 1997. Several baseline surveys of the biodiversity in the Falkland Islands are underway.

Montserrat

16 A number of biodiversity conservation activities have been undertaken on the island:

- ┆ all lands have been zoned to facilitate development and conservation on the basis of land capability;
- ┆ a survey of the bat, frog and lizard population has been completed. This was done jointly by the Montserrat National Trust, Flora and Fauna International and the Forestry Division of the Ministry of Agriculture, Trade and the Environment;
- ┆ draft Forestry, Wildlife and National Parks Legislation is now before the Executive Council and should be enacted shortly;
- ┆ a number of reforestation efforts have been undertaken primarily for watershed management, soil and water conservation and for the creation of suitable wildlife habitat;
- ┆ a revised Animals and Trespass and Pounds Ordinance is being vigorously enforced to arrest the adverse effects of feral livestock on the terrestrial and marine environments;
- ┆ a baseline survey and management plan was conducted for the Foxes Bay Wildlife Reserve. This was a partnership effort of the University of the West Indies, the Montserrat National Trust and the Forestry Division. Montserrat is actively considering the necessary steps to enable it to sign the Biodiversity Convention.

Pitcairn Islands

17 A draft management plan has been produced for the environment on Henderson Island in the Pitcairn Islands. This is currently with the Island Council for approval.

British Indian Ocean Territory

18 The University of Warwick is leading an expedition to the British Indian Ocean Territory in early 1996. This will draw up a conservation plan for the Territory.

Guernsey

19 A baseline study of Guernsey flora and fauna is in the final stages of completion, and this will be followed by consideration of a strategy for the implementation of such protection measures as are considered necessary.

Isle of Man

20 The Isle of Man has enabling legislation in place. Its Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has

conducted a baseline survey of the Island to help in determining which areas are worthy of specific protective measures. It is now moving onto a second phase survey which will look at the interesting areas in more detail with an eventual view to deciding which should be designated as areas of specific interest.

