



**Review of the Status of Implementation
of the Convention on Biological Diversity and of Biodiversity Action Plans
in the European Union Overseas Entities**

DISCUSSION PAPER

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

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NOTE TO READERS AND REVIEWERS

This discussion paper has been produced to provide the basis for consultation and dialogue among stakeholders concerned with biodiversity conservation and sustainable development in the overseas entities of the European Union, and with the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity in these entities. It contains preliminary conclusions and recommendations that are offered for review and discussion. It is a technical working document, and its contents do not necessarily reflect the policies, positions and views of IUCN or any of its Members and partners.

This document will be used in consultation during and immediately after the Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity to be held in Japan in October 2010. Readers and reviewers are kindly asked to send their comments, corrections and recommendations, no later than 5 November 2010, by e-mail to:

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Table of contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS	1
ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS.....	2
GLOSSARY AND DEFINITIONS.....	3
1 INTRODUCTION.....	4
2 CBD IMPLEMENTATION IN EU OVERSEAS ENTITIES	5
2.1. CBD COMMITMENTS AND COMPLIANCE IN THE EU OVERSEAS ENTITIES.....	5
2.2. BIODIVERSITY PLANNING IN THE OVERSEAS ENTITIES, STATUS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	6
2.3. MAIN ACTIONS IMPLEMENTED	7
2.3.1. <i>Policy and legislation</i>	7
2.3.2. <i>Protected areas</i>	8
2.3.3. <i>Other conservation programmes</i>	9
2.3.4. <i>Institutional development and capacity building</i>	9
2.3.5. <i>Research</i>	10
2.3.6. <i>Financing</i>	10
2.4. RESULTS OBTAINED	10
3 COLLABORATION AND LINKAGES IN SUPPORT OF CBD AND NBSAP IMPLEMENTATION IN THE EU OVERSEAS ENTITIES	16
3.1. BETWEEN THE OVERSEAS ENTITIES AND THE CBD	16
3.2. BETWEEN THE OVERSEAS ENTITIES AND INSTITUTIONS IN THE EU COUNTRIES	17
3.3. BETWEEN AND AMONG OVERSEAS ENTITIES.....	17
3.4. BETWEEN THE OVERSEAS ENTITIES AND THEIR GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS	18
3.5. BETWEEN THE OVERSEAS ENTITIES AND THE EU INSTITUTIONS.....	19
3.6. BETWEEN OVERSEAS ENTITIES AND GLOBAL NETWORKS.....	20
4 CRITICAL ISSUES	20
5 PRINCIPLES TO GUIDE FUTURE ACTION.....	23
6 RECOMMENDATIONS	24
6.1. RECOMMENDATIONS IN RELATION TO EU INSTITUTIONS.....	24
6.2. RECOMMENDATIONS TO EU MEMBER STATES	26
6.3. RECOMMENDATIONS TO ACTORS IN ORs AND OCTs.....	27
6.4. RECOMMENDATIONS TO REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS.....	27
6.5. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CBD	27
6.7. RECOMMENDATIONS TO IUCN	28
APPENDIX 1: STATUS OF CBD IMPLEMENTATION IN GREENLAND (DENMARK)	30
APPENDIX 2: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, NATIONAL STUDY OF FRANCE	32
APPENDIX 3: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, NATIONAL STUDY OF THE NETHERLANDS.....	35
APPENDIX 4: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, NATIONAL STUDY OF PORTUGAL	38
APPENDIX 5: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, NATIONAL STUDY OF SPAIN.....	41
APPENDIX 6: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, NATIONAL STUDY OF THE UK	44

Acronyms and abbreviations

AOSIS	Alliance of Small Island States
BAP	Biodiversity action plan
BAT	British Antarctic Territory
BEST	Biodiversity Ecosystem Services for the EU Overseas Territories
BIOT	British Indian Ocean Territory
BSAP	Biodiversity strategy and action plan
BVI	British Virgin Islands
CANARI	Caribbean Natural Resources Institute
CARMABI	Caribbean Research and Management of Biodiversity
CBBIA	Capacity-Building on Biodiversity and Impact Assessment
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CCCCC	Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre
CEP	Caribbean Environment Programme
CITES	Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species
COP	Conference of Parties
DCNA	Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DG	Directorate-General
DOM	<i>Département d'outre-mer</i>
EDF	European Development Fund
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EIA	Environmental impact assessment
EU	European Union
FRB	<i>Fondation pour la Recherche sur la Biodiversité</i>
GINR	Greenland Institute of Natural Resources
GLISPA	Global Islands Partnership
IAS	Invasive alien species
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
LDC	Least developed country
MEA	Multi-lateral environmental agreement
NAPA	National Action Plan for Adaptation to climate change
NBSAP	National biodiversity strategy and action plan
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OCT	Overseas country and territory
OCTA	Overseas Countries and Territories Association
ONERC	<i>Observatoire National sur les Effets du Changement Climatique</i>
OR	Outermost region
OT	Overseas territory
PII	Pacific Invasives Initiative
POW	Programme of work
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SAISP	South Atlantic Invasive Species Programme
SIDS	Small island developing State
SPAW	(Protocol on) Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife
SPREP	(Secretariat of the) Pacific Regional Environment Programme
TAAF	<i>Terres Australes et Antarctiques Françaises</i>
UKOTCF	United Kingdom Overseas Territories Conservation Forum
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

Glossary and definitions

Acceptance and accession: see *Ratification*.

Country: When capitalised in this document, this word will refer to the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) of the European Union (EU). There are currently twenty-one OCTs: Anguilla, Aruba, Bermuda, British Antarctic Territory (BAT), British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT), British Virgin Islands (BVI), Cayman Islands, Falkland Islands, French Polynesia, French Southern and Antarctic Lands (*Terres Australes et Antarctiques Françaises* – TAAF), Greenland, Mayotte, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles¹, New Caledonia, Pitcairn, Saint Helena - Tristan da Cunha - Ascension Island, Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands, and Wallis and Futuna

Local: this word is used in this report to refer to the level of each overseas entity, regardless of its status within the EU (*Overseas Country and Territory*, or *Outermost Region*).

Ratification: States which signed the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) when it was open for signature must then proceed to ratify it, as signature of itself does not establish consent to be bound to an international treaty. This is why most State Parties to the Convention became Parties by ratification. States which have not signed a treaty during the time when it is open for signature can only accede to it, and thus become Parties by *accession*. In some States and organisations, the word *acceptance* is used in the place of *ratification*, but it has exactly the same legal effect.

*Outermost Region and Overseas Country and Territory*²: Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) refer to those entities which are not part of, but associated with, the European Union under Part IV of the Treaty of the European Union, distinct from Outermost Regions (OR) which are an integral part of the European Union under the Treaty of the European Union. These appellations are commonly used in this document to simplify the complex status of overseas entities in each EU Member State.

Region/regional: in this document, the words *region* and *regional* (not capitalised) refer to geographic regions, e.g. the Caribbean or Oceania. When capitalised, the word *Region* will refer to those entities within EU Member States that have the status of *Outermost Region*. There are currently seven ORs of the EU: the Azores, the Canary Islands, Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Madeira, Martinique and Reunion, plus Saint-Barthélemy and Saint-Martin that were formerly part of Guadeloupe and are acquiring a separate OCT status.

State: in this document, the word *State*, when capitalised, refers to independent sovereign States, including the Member States of the EU and the Small island developing States (SIDS).

¹ On 10 October 2010, the autonomous country of the Netherlands Antilles, which currently includes Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, Sint Eustatius and Sint Maarten, will be dismantled. Curaçao and Sint Maarten will obtain the status of autonomous country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands, a status comparable to that of Aruba at present. Bonaire, Saba and Sint Eustatius, known as the BES-islands, will become part of the Netherlands as a special municipality.

² The term *Overseas Territory* (OT) is the accepted term in the UK to refer to that country's Overseas Countries and Territories.

1 Introduction

There are thirty overseas entities that are linked to six Member States of the European Union (EU): Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom (UK). Spread on all oceans, home to a unique diversity of species and ecosystems, these European Outermost Regions (OR) and Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) are of crucial importance for biodiversity at a global scale. They are located in biodiversity hotspots (Caribbean, Western Indian Ocean, Oceania), in major wilderness areas (Guiana shield), and in key regions for polar ecosystems and fish stocks (Greenland, Falkland Islands, French Sub-Antarctic islands, South Georgia). Together, they host more than 20 % of the world's coral reefs and lagoons, and a lot more species than mainland EU. For example, New Caledonia alone has about as many endemic species as the entire European continent, French Guiana includes an area of Amazon rainforest the size of Portugal and the Chagos archipelago in the British Indian Ocean Territory is home to the largest coral atoll in the world.

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is the main global instrument to guide biodiversity conservation and management. Following the negotiation of a text under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) between 1988 and 1992, the Convention was opened for signature on 5 June 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. It remained open for signature until 4 June 1993, by which time it had received 168 signatures, and it entered into force on 29 December 1993. With 193 State Parties, it is a broad global treaty that provides a comprehensive framework for the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

Because of the richness and value of their biological diversity, and because of the constitutional and institutional peculiarities of the overseas entities of the European Union, IUCN saw the need to conduct an in-depth review of the status of implementation of the CBD and of specific strategies and plans as part of CBD-determined National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP) at national levels, for the purpose of:

- identifying the current status of the various legal and policy instruments, strategies, action plans and institutional frameworks for biodiversity conservation in the EU overseas entities;
- noting the extent to which these instruments have been and are being implemented, as part of national processes, and assess the main factors and processes that support or alternatively hinder implementation;
- identifying the main lessons learned and documenting some of the best practices and exemplary cases of biodiversity conservation in the overseas entities;
- analysing the extent to which these instruments are consistent with, supportive of, and supported by the legislation, policies, strategies and institutional arrangements for biodiversity conservation that exist at four levels:
 - within the EU Member States of which the entities are part or to which they are associated;

- within geographic regions (Arctic region, Austral Ocean, Caribbean, Guiana Shield, Indian Ocean, Macaronesia, Oceania, South-Atlantic Ocean);
- within the European Union and its institutions;
- at the global level, especially in relation to the CBD Programme of Work on Island Biodiversity.

This work is part of the IUCN Programme on EU Overseas Regions and Overseas Countries and Territories. It builds on IUCN's earlier efforts in support of biodiversity conservation and adaptation to climate change in the EU overseas entities, with the hosting, in partnership with the Regional Council of *La Réunion* and the *Observatoire National sur les Effets du Changement Climatique (ONERC)* of France, of the Conference on *The European Union and its Overseas Entities: Strategies to Counter Climate Change and Biodiversity Loss* held in Reunion Island in July 2008, which resulted in the publication of the Message from Reunion Island as well as a comprehensive report entitled *Climate Change and Biodiversity in the European Union Overseas Entities*. This IUCN Programme, which is funded by the Government of France, aims to implement some of the 21 recommendations endorsed at the 2008 Reunion Island Conference. One of the results expected is the strengthening of, and the provision of support to, biodiversity strategies in these overseas entities, and in the geographic regions of which they are part.

This discussion paper was prepared by Dominique Benzaken, Gillian Cooper and Yves Renard, and it is based primarily on national studies focusing on the status of implementation of the Convention of Biological Diversity and Biodiversity Action Plans in the overseas entities of France (authored by Aurélie Bocquet of the French National Committee for IUCN), the Netherlands (authored by Gerard van Buurt and Rob van den Bergh of CURCONSULT), Portugal and Spain (both authored by António Domingos Abreu, independent consultant), and the United Kingdom (authored by Gillian Cooper, independent consultant). It benefited as well from a regional analysis, also authored by Gillian Cooper, from a review of documents related to the implementation of the CBD in Denmark and Greenland, and from reviews of earlier drafts by experts and stakeholders. These studies and the preparation of the discussion paper were coordinated by Yves Renard of Green Park Consultants GPC.

2 CBD implementation in EU overseas entities

2.1. CBD commitments and compliance in the EU overseas entities

The status of participation in and application of the Convention on Biological Diversity on the various entities varies according to the constitutional status of these entities, but the protocol of the Convention allows for voting representation only by signatory national and federal States of which overseas entities are part. The situation for the six countries can be summarised as follows:

Denmark: the Kingdom of Denmark became a State Party to the CBD by ratification (1993). The Convention applies fully to Greenland, an autonomous entity within the Kingdom and one of the EU's Overseas Countries and Territories.

France: France became a State Party to the CBD by ratification (1994) and the Convention applies to all its overseas entities, some being Outermost Regions and others Overseas Countries and Territories of the EU.

Netherlands: the Kingdom of the Netherlands became a State Party to the CBD, on behalf of the Netherlands, by acceptance (1994). The treaty came into force in Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles in June 1999.

Portugal: the Azores and Madeira are autonomous regions of Portugal and Outermost Regions of Europe, where the CBD fully applies by virtue of Portugal's ratification of the Convention (1993).

Spain: the Canary Islands constitute an autonomous region of Spain and an Outermost Region of the EU, where the CBD fully applies by virtue of Spain's ratification of the Convention (1993).

United Kingdom: the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland signed the Convention (1992) on behalf of the Kingdom, including its Overseas Territories, but only three OTs (the British Virgin Islands – BVI, the Cayman Islands, and St. Helena and its territories of Ascension and Tristan da Cunha) were included, at their request, in the UK's ratification of the Convention (1994).

2.2. Biodiversity planning in the overseas entities, status and responsibilities

Biodiversity planning in overseas entities is a combination of national and local level action. National-level strategies and action plans for biodiversity, and of the place of overseas entities in these strategies and plans, can be summarised as follows:

EU Member State	Overview of the status of biodiversity planning
Denmark	As an autonomous part of the Kingdom of Denmark, Greenland has separate planning and reporting arrangements with the CBD. A Strategy and Action plan for biodiversity in Greenland was adopted in 2009, and it is considered a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) for the purpose of the CBD. The Fourth National Report on the Implementation of the CBD in Greenland was submitted in January 2010.
France	France has a National Biodiversity Strategy that applies to all its ORs and OCTs; it was adopted in 2004. The Strategy includes 11 sectoral plans, one of which is a sectoral plan for overseas entities, adopted in September 2006. The French ORs and OCTs are all covered by an Action Plan specifically dedicated to these overseas entities, and they have all developed an individual BAP. The Fourth National Report on the Implementation of the CBD in France was submitted in July 2009.

EU Member State	Overview of the status of biodiversity planning
Netherlands	The Netherlands have a Biodiversity Policy Programme for 2008 – 2011. It makes very little reference to the Dutch OCTs. The Dutch OCTs are not covered by the Dutch national strategy and action plan, they do not have a specific BAP at local level, but they have comprehensive local legislation at the level of the countries (Aruba and Netherlands Antilles) and the individual islands within the Netherlands Antilles. In 2004, the Netherlands Antilles formulated a Nature and Environmental Policy Plan for 2004-2007. The Fourth National Report on the Implementation of the CBD in the Netherlands was submitted in April 2010.
Portugal	Portugal formulated its National Strategy for Nature Conservation and Biodiversity in 2001. The Strategy does not deal specifically with the autonomous regions of the Azores and Madeira, and these ORs do not have their own strategy or action plan. Each OR has a range of policy and legal instruments dealing with conservation and biodiversity. The Third National Report on the Implementation of the CBD in Portugal was submitted in March 2007. It covers the two ORs.
Spain	Spain formulated its National Strategy for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity in 2008. The Strategy covers the autonomous region of the Canary Islands, and this OR does not have its own strategy or action plan, but there is a range of local policy and legal instruments dealing with conservation and biodiversity The Fourth National Report on the Implementation of the CBD in Spain was submitted in March 2009. It covers the Canary Islands.
United Kingdom	The UK developed its Biodiversity Action Plan in 1994, with an updated UK BAP produced in 2007 and called 'Conserving Biodiversity – the UK Approach'. The BAP does not deal specifically with the UK Overseas Territories (OT). In 2009, the UK released a UK Overseas Territories Biodiversity Strategy. A few individual OTs have their own strategy or action plan (Cayman Islands and Bermuda). All UK OTs have a range of policy and legal instruments dealing with conservation and biodiversity, and there is an Environment Charter that binds each of the OTs and the UK on some aspects of biodiversity conservation. The Fourth National Report on the Implementation of the CBD in the UK was submitted in May 2009. It makes mention of a few of the OTs, and provides very little detail on implementation.

There are also at least three cases (Anegada in the British Virgin Islands, Tenerife in the Canary Islands, and Tristan da Cunha) where an overseas entity does not have an explicit biodiversity strategy or action plan, but where a smaller geographic unit within that entity has taken the initiative to formulate its own strategy.

2.3. Main actions implemented

2.3.1. Policy and legislation

Most EU overseas entities have put in place some level of policy and legislation to support conservation activities. In some cases these actions are guided by an overall policy at the national level or in some cases at the local level. One critical issue is the harmonisation of these plans (between the local and national), and in most ORs and OCTs some steps have been taken in recent years to integrate policies.

In Aruba and in the Netherlands Antilles there is legislation that provides a policy framework for nature conservation and this stipulates that all islands should have a nature policy plan, however only one of the five islands of the Netherlands Antilles (Bonaire) has developed such a plan, and it is now outdated.

In France, the recent policy review and formulation process known as “*Grenelle de l’Environnement*” (2007) considered issues related to the overseas entities and resulted in the promulgation of two important pieces of legislation (2009 and 2010) that have direct relevance to biodiversity. The conclusions of these consultations have been taken into account in the formulation of updated versions of the Action Plans for 2009 – 2010, including the Action Plan for the overseas entities.

In 2009 the UK developed a strategy for the biodiversity conservation of the UK OTs. The strategy provides an overview of the UK government’s commitments to the OTs and has set in train a number of changes in the institutional arrangements to deliver this strategy. Each of the UK OTs has some kind of local plan which provides a framework for biodiversity conservation. A number of UK OTs are also in the process of modernising their conservation legislation (BVI, Cayman Islands) to provide Conservation Departments with additional powers and suitable institutional arrangements but it remains to be seen if these will be passed by their respective administrations.

In the Macaronesian islands of the Azores, Canaries and Madeira, there is no local plan but there is adequate local legislation for the conservation of biodiversity, and significant progress has been made in recent years to strengthen and update the legal instruments.

In virtually every case, the main issue is not the absence of policy or legislation, but it is the lack of integration between biodiversity strategies and plans on the one hand and other policy and legal instruments on the other.

2.3.2. Protected areas

Steady progress has been made towards designation and management of protected areas. Both the French ORs and OCTs and the UK OCTs have significantly increased their surface areas under protection, and a number of these areas have been given a status of global significance as World Heritage Sites and Ramsar Sites (for example the Lagoons of New Caledonia and the Reunion Island World Heritage Sites). The Netherlands OCTs also have newly established protected areas in the marine zone, others are planned and Aruba recently established a terrestrial park. The Spanish and Portuguese ORs are well linked in with the national and European park systems and also have Biosphere Reserves (3 in the Azores and 1 in the application stage in Madeira). These Biosphere Reserves are considered excellent examples of integrating the social, cultural and natural aspects in the protected area. In France, while there is a national strategy on protected areas, it does not however include the overseas entities.

Effective management, as a result of inadequate or insecure funding, remains a challenge for a number of overseas entities, even for those that have established systems to become self sustaining through user fees and dive tags.

2.3.3. Other conservation programmes

Species recovery: a number of islands have established species recovery plans, either as part of recent BAP processes or as collaborative projects between local NGOs, governmental agencies and international NGOs. France now has national plans of action for four overseas fauna species in critical danger of extinction, and for four flora species (*Zanthoxylum heterophyllum* and *Polyscias aemiliguineae Bernardi* in Reunion Island, and *Bactris nancibaensis* and *Astrocarium minus* in French Guiana). There is also a plan of action for marine turtle conservation in French Guiana, Guadeloupe and Martinique. Madeira and the Azores, together with the Canary Islands, have developed joint initiatives promoting the knowledge of the conservation status of the endemic and indigenous biodiversity as well as identified common strategies for managing Macaronesian biodiversity.

Invasive alien species: awareness of invasive alien species (IAS) in the Caribbean ORs and OCTs (Dutch, French and UK) has increased in recent years, as illustrated by current efforts to control the lionfish invasion in the near shore marine environment. Recently developed BAPs (for example those of the Cayman Islands and most French ORs and OCTs) and regional programmes such as the South Atlantic Invasive Species Programme (SAISP) implemented by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) in collaboration with UK OT governments in the area and the Pacific Invasives Initiative (PII) have paid special attention to identifying invasive species population numbers, pathways and methods of control. All French ORs and OCTs have developed a local strategy against invasive alien species. Macaronesian ORs have developed a Top100 list of the invasive fauna and flora; this is a joint initiative to identify the pathways for the most relevant alien invasive species supported by robust scientific information. Management actions are now in place with positive results

Climate Change: this issue has been given higher priority in the last few years, with the formulation of a number of adaptation programmes, and with some initiatives looking specifically at the biodiversity dimensions of climate change. In Madeira and the Canary Islands, for example, Project Bioclimac, which started in 2010, aims to identify the impacts of climate change in the germination processes and genetic variability of selected plant species of Macaronesia. In the Caribbean, the UK OTs are now formally part of the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC), which looks at adaptation measures and disseminates information on climate change research and impacts. France is developing its National Adaptation Plan which includes Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Martinique and Reunion but not the OCTs, as competency for developing such plans rest with the OCTs themselves.

2.3.4. Institutional development and capacity building

Within the last five years, institutional changes in the EU Member States have been positive towards support to conservation and natural resource management, although in many cases this was long overdue and followed continuous campaigning by NGOs to improve EU Member State support to its overseas entities.

At a local level the picture is very mixed. Some conservation agencies are well resourced and have large numbers of staff while others are severely under-staffed. Smaller OCTs tend to have the biggest challenge. For example, in the Netherlands

Antilles, the government organisation in charge of nature and the environment depends on only a limited number of qualified staff and capacity building and transfer of institutional knowledge is a concern. By contrast, in the Portuguese ORs there has been a significant investment in the public sector over the last two decades and both Regions have established research departments and laboratory facilities covering the most important areas of biodiversity. However, a lack of clear institutional responsibilities and insufficient allocation of resources to support the implementation of the proposed actions throughout the OCTs has been noted as a concern.

A number of regional capacity building projects have been implemented that have benefited the overseas entities, such as the exchange programme for rangers in the Dutch Caribbean Islands sponsored by the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) and a training programme for rangers through an extensive 'apprenticeship' arrangement implemented by a local organisation, Stinapa Bonaire. In the UK OTs, a project to build capacity of civil society organisations in mobilisation, organisational development and facilitation is being implemented by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI).

2.3.5. Research

A number of important conservation programmes and research initiatives have been undertaken that fulfil the CBD Programme of work (POW) on Island Biodiversity. These initiatives range from species inventories, species population monitoring, collection of germplasm, seed banks, and mapping and ecosystem classification. Much of this work has been collaborative between international NGOs, EU Member State agencies and local NGOs and government departments.

2.3.6. Financing

With the changes and improvements in the institutional arrangements mentioned above have come positive changes to the financing arrangements. In France the "*Grenelle de l'Environnement*" process allowed for the creation of a funding arrangement for the implementation of local action plans. In the UK the Department for Food and Agricultural Research (DEFRA) has provided funding for improved institutional arrangements from 2007 to support OTs and has earmarked £1.5 million from its Darwin Initiative for OT biodiversity projects, although the future of this fund is now 'in review'. It remains a distinct feature of biodiversity planning and management in overseas entities that the strategies and plans are seldom supported by dedicated funding allocations.

At the local level in the OCTs, the amount of funding available depends on the income of the countries or territories but it can be estimated that local governments allocate less than one per cent of their budget to the staffing and conservation work of their conservation departments. NGOs have been able to successfully bring in external funds, although their pool of sources is very limited due to their status as EU OCTs. These funds have also tended to be small, often provided as part of regional programmes. Those with a protected area management mandate have also established systems to charge user fees that support conservation and staffing needs, as in the cases of the BVI or the Netherlands Antilles.

2.4. Results obtained

The results obtained can, in most instances, be measured against the goals and targets of the CBD's Programme of work on Island Biodiversity, and this section

provides a summary of the results obtained and impacts made in achieving these goals and targets across the ORs and OCTs.

GOAL 1: Promote the conservation of the biological diversity of island ecosystems, habitats and biomes

1.1 10% of island ecological regions conserved

Probably the greatest achievement has been made in the establishment and management of protected areas in the overseas entities. Of the inhabited ORs and OCTs, Madeira is the entity that has the greatest percentage of land area under some degree of protection (more than 75%), while Martinique and Reunion have 57% and 47% respectively (although the regime of protection in Martinique under the status of “*Parc Naturel Régional*” does not provide for strict biodiversity conservation). Tristan da Cunha has 44% coverage, the Canary Islands 40% and the BVI 33%. In the uninhabited locations, the Chagos Archipelago (British Indian Ocean Territory) is now the largest no-take marine reserve in the world.

Designation of sites based on their ecological representation has been less strategic in some locations, particularly in the OCTs. However, as ecological surveying and classification has improved on the OCTs over the last 10-20 years, knowledge of the different ecological regions has begun to inform the designation of sites.

1.2 Protection through comprehensive, effectively managed protected area networks

Protected area networks exist for some of the EU ORs and OCTs. In the ORs, the closer link to the EU provides for greater accountability from the EU Member State towards management of protected areas. The Spanish and Portuguese ORs protected area systems are also included in the network of European sites in the Natura 2000 system.

The OCTs however have a more fragmented system of management. In the UK OTs, few islands have a system of protected areas apart from the BVI, where there is a well-established network, but with only five of the 51 designated sites having management plans. In the Cayman Islands, a system exists for the marine protected areas but not for the terrestrial locations, and management is broken up between government management and management by NGOs or statutory bodies such as the National Parks Trust. In the Dutch OCTs, most of the protected area management is carried out by NGOs that receive a government subsidy; there is no formal network, but the DCNA provides an important coordination and support mechanism and is, for all practical purposes, a network of protected area management agencies.

Where they are of global importance, the protected areas of the OCTs have been included in international systems such as the World Heritage Sites of Canary Islands, Madeira, New Caledonia, Pitcairn, Reunion, and Tristan da Cunha,

In the case of OCTs, funding constraints have affected management effectiveness and enforcement. There is often a long lag period in-between designation of a site and allocation of funds for management. Many protected areas have strived to be self supporting through the use of fees from diving and entrance charges, but this is often not sufficient, it is subject to fluctuation and it makes them highly dependent on tourism use for sustainability. Where government subsidies – from national budgets - are used to supplement income, grants and subsidies are often not received on a sufficiently regular and timely basis for maintaining effective management and conservation work.

GOAL 2: Promote the conservation of island species diversity

2.1 Populations of taxonomic groups restored or their decline reduced

The decline of some 'flagship species' of critically endangered taxonomic groups has been arrested due in large part to their protection within the borders of protected areas. Populations of many of the flagship species may only ever reach stable sizes but they have been saved from the brink of extinction. An extensive array of recovery plans are now also in existence following the development of BAPs in ORs and OCTs, but it is too early to determine their effectiveness.

Nevertheless, there is still a huge task to recover populations of the large numbers of native and endemic species, and to improve their critical status and range. In the Azores, for example, 60% of the top 100 priority species have experienced a reduction in population size. In terms of their distribution area, 73% are facing a reduction.

2.2. Status of threatened island species improved

Numerous inventories and studies of island species exist, many of which have been used to inform or have been instigated as a result of the BAP processes. In islands which have not yet developed a BAP, information on status of species is patchier. However, in general there is good recognition of where gaps in data exist.

In the past, particularly in the case of OCTs, much research was conducted by external experts and information did not remain in country or territory. As a result, taxonomic expertise and information was not being built locally. However programmes and processes now exist in some overseas entities, such as the Cayman Island's 'Visiting researcher programme' where experts must apply for permission prior to undertaking their research and local persons are trained alongside.

In general, more needs to be done to establish baselines on the status of threatened species, especially in the countries and territories that have not undergone the BAP process.

GOAL 3: Promote the conservation of island genetic diversity

3.1 Genetic diversity of crops, livestock, valuable species and associated local knowledge maintained

Work towards this target is mixed and generally lacking, as awareness of this aspect of biodiversity is relatively low and its importance is not sufficiently recognised. Reports from the Dutch OCTs, for example, show that a significant amount of work was done to document local land races, but a lack of action has resulted in the near disappearance of some land races of livestock. This would suggest the need for greater cooperation between biodiversity conservation agencies and agricultural research and development departments.

However, a good example is the Macaronesian islands that have a co-operation project aiming to preserve the genetic heritage of these islands. The Canary Islands have an official catalogue of indigenous races and measures in place for their conservation.

GOAL 4: Promote sustainable use and consumption

4.1 Island biodiversity based products derived from sustainably managed sources

In general, modernisation in lifestyles means that the use of traditional products derived from biodiversity has been in decline, thereby reducing pressure on biodiversity sources. In the Canary Islands, 'certification' to demonstrate that products

produced locally are derived from sustainably managed sources has promoted good practice and awareness.

4.2 Unsustainable consumption of island biodiversity reduced

Many islands have implemented fishing quotas and closed seasons for species that are commercially valuable to prevent overfishing. In addition, fishing licenses and legislation to prevent certain types of disruptive fishing practices, such as spear guns, have been implemented. Mooring buoys are now standard practice for anchoring on many ORs and OCTs. In Bonaire, for example, divers are not allowed to use gloves and should avoid touching corals at all times.

Enforcement at all level is a challenge. In addition, monitoring of the impact of quotas and closed seasons is not presently undertaken in any systematic way. There are also concerns of illegal fishing in the EEZ of the South Atlantic islands by foreign ships but the impact of this is unknown.

4.3 Endangered wild flora and fauna protected from international trade

All EU countries with ORs and OCTs are signatories to the Convention in the International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES). Mechanisms for enforcement appear well established in most cases.

GOAL 5: Pressures from habitat loss, land-use change and degradation, and sustainable water use, reduced on islands

5.1 Rate of loss and degradation of natural habitats significantly decreased

The establishment of protected areas is an important instrument against habitat loss, land use change and degradation. However in many ORs and OCTs, there is concern that use of biodiversity outside protected areas must be more sustainably managed. Sand mining, indiscriminate land clearance, waste disposal, tourism and real estate development and damage due to overgrazing from livestock are some of the areas that are inconsistent with the conservation of biological diversity, but these are generally issues outside the control of conservation agencies.

In general, land use plans make inadequate consideration of environment and biodiversity issues and are non-operational in many cases. Mandating the use of environmental impact assessments (EIA) prior to development is gradually being enforced through the revision of land use planning laws in the OCTs. However, current loop holes exist for circumventing the planning process even where EIAs are a legal requirement, such as the current debate in the BVI, where development plans above USD 10 million can be approved directly by the Premier.

Situations however vary greatly between countries and territories. In Sint Maarten, for example, population pressure is very significant and there are hardly any natural habitats left as a result of real-estate development and marinas during the last three decades, while New Caledonia still possesses large natural areas. The overall picture, however, is that the rate of loss and degradation of natural habitats in ORs and OCTs has not significantly decreased in recent years, and that this is one of the main challenges to biodiversity conservation at the moment.

GOAL 6: Control threats to island biological diversity from invasive alien species

6.1 Pathways for major invasive alien species (IAS) identified and controlled

Awareness of the threat of invasive species has received much greater attention in the last 5 – 10 years. Being mostly islands, many OR and OCT are particularly

vulnerable to invasive species and environments have been disrupted by the introduction of alien species over centuries.

The ORs have a well established programme to address issues of IAS. In Macaronesia, there is an established database where at least 400 introduced species have been recorded and their pathways identified. In the French ORs and OCTs, a number of activities are underway, and the French National Committee for IUCN coordinates an initiative that involves all the overseas entities of France and is implemented in collaboration with a very wide range of actors. In the other overseas entities, controlling pathways is slowly being developed but in general is insufficient. This is tricky due to the coordination needed with a number of other authorities at air and sea ports and increased threats due to globalisation of the trade in plants and ornamentals. Of particular mention is the SAISP which took a regional approach to the assessment of invasive populations and outlined the management requirements for invasive species controls in the participating territories.

6.2 Management plans in place and implemented for alien species

Some BAP processes developed management plans for invasive control (e.g. Cayman Islands) but it is unclear if eradication work has been guided by management plans in the other OTs. In general there are actions to manage alien species but few management plans to guide.

GOAL 7: Address challenges to island biodiversity from climate change, and pollution

7.1 Resilience of components of biodiversity to adapt to climate change enhanced

There have been few specific actions towards this target, although it can be argued that efforts at protected area management always contribute to the resilience of ecosystems. A number of the better resourced conservation departments have now included a staff member or unit to deal with climate change related issues (e.g. BVI and Cayman). Management plans for protected areas now consider impacts of climate change in the Canary Islands and in general it is assumed that effective biodiversity conservation will improve resilience to climate change. This target may need greater support to be understood and implemented. Recent initiatives in support of this goal include the UK funded project for the Caribbean UKOTs entitled Enhancing capacity for Adaptation to Climate Change, which aims to facilitate the development of National Action Plan for Adaptation to climate change (NAPA) in UK OTs. France has also conducted a consultation with its ORs and OCTs in the development of its NAPA.

7.2 Pollution and its impacts on island biodiversity reduced

There appears to be no systematic plan for pollution control in specific relation to biodiversity, despite the serious threats from oil pollution, sewage and nutrient pollution in fresh and marine waters, and plastic dumping in many ORs and OCTs. Most work appears to have been reactive rather than precautionary.

GOAL 8: Maintain capacity of island ecosystems to deliver goods and services and support livelihoods

8.1 Capacity of island ecosystems to deliver goods and services improved

8.2 Biological resources that support sustainable livelihoods, health and food security maintained

It is generally assumed that existing conservation measures will contribute to effective ecosystem functioning and will consequently enhance the capacity of ecosystems to deliver goods and services and support livelihoods, but most of the BAPs and similar

planning tools in overseas entities make little reference to livelihoods, and conservation in most EU overseas entities is not yet approached as an instrument to support sustainable livelihoods. As elsewhere, there are many linkages between biodiversity management and ecosystems goods and services in the EU overseas entities (watershed protection, nature tourism, fisheries, etc.), but these linkages are insufficiently recognised by local actors and are therefore not easily identified and measured.

GOAL 9: Maintain socio-cultural diversity of indigenous and local communities on islands

9.1 Measures to protect traditional knowledge promoted and facilitated

9.2 Traditional knowledge preserved, maintained, acknowledged and shared equitably

In general very little work has been done on this. There has been some collaborative work with public and private museums, National Trusts and archives departments which have documentation on traditional agricultural practices and cultural heritage.

There appears to be no legislation that protects local community rights over their traditional knowledge in any of the ORs and OCTs.

GOAL 10: Ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of island genetic resources

10.1 Access to genetic resources are in line with the CBD

10.2 Benefits arising from commercial and other utilization of island biodiversity are shared equitably.

It is only recently that these issues have been given consideration in the ORs and OCTs. In France, for example, the Ministry of Ecology has commissioned the *Fondation pour la Recherche sur la Biodiversité* (FRB) to conduct a study on the conditions of access to and sharing of the benefits of biodiversity.

GOAL 11: Parties have improved financial, human, scientific, technical and technological capacity to implement the Convention

11.1 New and additional financial resources allocated to islands

Financing of biodiversity conservation remains a serious concern in the EU overseas entities, even if some progress has been made in accessing new and additional resources. In the OCTs that do not receive a national government allocation for conservation actions or from the EU, local agencies have been able to source additional resources from grants – a few international and some from regional funding sources although the opportunities for external funding for OCTs is very limited. Some National Trusts, such as the National Trust of the Cayman Islands, have been very successful in securing substantial gift donations.

11.2 Technologies transferred to SIDS to allow for effective programme implementation

In the UKOTs there are collaborative working arrangements for species conservation work between international NGOs, government departments and local NGOs. Considerable technology cooperation is also taking place between the ORs and OCTs and their respective EU Member States.

11.3 Capacities to implement programme strengthened

The BAP preparation process, while it is a big task for small conservation and environment departments to take on, has clearly helped to build capacity in the respective agencies.

The issue of succession and institutional knowledge management has been identified as needing higher priority in a number of overseas entities, notably in the Dutch OCTs. Very few individuals, some nearing retirement, have a great deal of institutional knowledge that needs to be transferred.

In the case of French Guiana, there are a number of issues, challenges and opportunities that come from the specificity of local conditions. One of the main achievements of the past few years, in addition to those that concern all French ORs, is the creation of the National Park that covers roughly 40% of the territory. Because of this Region's rich biodiversity and the difficulty in ensuring effective control, trade in endangered species remains an issue in French Guiana. The impacts of gold mining, both legal and illegal, have been insufficiently considered in the biodiversity planning process, and yet it is one of the main threats to biodiversity. The preparation of the local BAP has however allowed for consideration of the issue of equitable access to and sharing of resources and this is being taken into account in the formulation of the National Park's Charter.

In Greenland, the primary sources of impact on biodiversity are hunting, habitat fragmentation, invasive species and pollution, as well as the predicted impacts of climate change on ecosystems and species distribution. Growth in transportation activities, oil and gas exploration and mineral exploration will also have increased impacts on habitats and species. With this rapid pace of change, Greenland recognises the need for a number of management instruments and actions, including the identification of priority conservation areas, continued efforts towards sustainable hunting, the systematic use of EAI in all development projects, and the use of an ecosystem-based approach to management. The recent formulation of an NBSAP for Greenland is a major step towards a comprehensive and effective approach to biodiversity conservation.

3 Collaboration and linkages in support of CBD and NBSAP implementation in the EU overseas entities

3.1. Between the overseas entities and the CBD

The status of the overseas entities as sub-national and/or local authorities in relation to the Parties to the CBD is clear and well defined in all but two instances:

- those OTs of the UK that have not been included in the ratification of the CBD by the UK (1994);
- Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles.

There is no direct relationship between the overseas entities and the CBD, because the competence for international affairs is the responsibility of the EU Member States as Parties to the Convention. Apart from a few occasions, institutions in these entities are not part of national delegations at Conferences of Parties (COP) and other international meetings, and regional activities of the CBD Secretariat do not include the EU overseas entities in those geographic regions. For example, there was no representation of the overseas entities from those geographic regions in the Regional and Sub-Regional Capacity-Development Workshops on Implementing NBSAPs and Mainstreaming Biodiversity that were held in and for the Caribbean (November 2008) and the Pacific (February 2009) at the initiative of the CBD Secretariat. There was however one instance where the Capacity-Building on Biodiversity and Impact

Assessment (CBBIA) project of the CBD Secretariat provided support to a training activity organised by the UKOTCF (October 2006). However, occasionally and in close coordination with their respective national governments, entities have in various instances in the past contributed to and participated in workshops and meetings of the Convention.

3.2. Between the overseas entities and institutions in the EU countries

While ORs have a status identical to that of other regions of Europe, and are as such served by national institutions in the same way, institutional arrangements to manage the relationship between EU Member States and the OCTs in the field of biodiversity are particularly complex. There are instances where the allocation of responsibility between agencies responsible for biodiversity and those responsible for overseas entities at central government level are unclear, with gaps or overlaps in mandates. There are also instances of duplication of mandates or lack of clarity in allocation of responsibilities between the national agencies at the level of the EU Member State and the agencies of the local government in the OCT.

One of the most positive factors in support of biodiversity conservation and management in the EU overseas entities is the existence and work of support mechanisms, such as the French National Committee for IUCN in the case of France, the Dutch National Committee for IUCN and its collaboration with the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) in the case of the Netherlands, and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) as well as the United Kingdom Overseas Territories Conservation Forum (UKOTCF) in the case of the UK. These institutions play a critical role in structuring and guiding the relationship between the overseas entities and the national agencies, both governmental and non-governmental, helping and encouraging these agencies to approach matters related to the overseas entities in a comprehensive fashion.

3.3. Between and among overseas entities

There are only two mechanisms that have been set-up to promote collaboration between all or most of the overseas entities of the European Union in the field of biodiversity:

- *Networking tropical and subtropical biodiversity research in outermost regions and territories of Europe in support of sustainable development (NET biome)*, is a consortium of eleven partners, representing regional or territorial bodies from the five EU Member States concerned by European tropical overseas territories that finance and/or manage research activities. It began in 2007, and is funded by the European Union;
- the *Biooverseas Initiative for biodiversity and environment* was set up by a group of umbrella conservation bodies and seeks to provide them with a co-ordinated approach to European Union institutions for the conservation of the EU's ORs and OCTs. After a short period of relative inactivity, due to uncertainties surrounding its coordination, efforts are currently underway to revive this important grouping and to allow it to perform its unique role in conservation advocacy on behalf of civil society.

There are however no formalised mechanisms specifically dedicated to facilitating collaboration among the overseas entities of two or more EU Member States in the field of biodiversity in any of the geographic regions where overseas entities are located, but agencies and representatives of ORs and OCTs have opportunities to

meet and exchange experiences and views in various fora organised by the EU institutions.

The national institutions and networks mentioned above (Dutch and French National Committees for IUCN, JNCC, UKOTCF, DCNA) all also play a facilitating role in communication and collaboration between organisations in overseas entities within countries (e.g. JNCC and UKOTCF for the UK OTs).

The proposed *EU overseas entities mechanism* will seek to provide a multi-stakeholder forum for dialogue and exchange to facilitate the implementation of the Message of Reunion Island. It is being facilitated by the IUCN EU Outermost Regions and Overseas Countries and Territories Programme, which aims among other things to enhance awareness and better integration of EU overseas entities biodiversity and climate change issues in EU and international policies and programmes³.

Mention should also be made of the Overseas Countries and Territories Association (OCTA), which was created at the first OCT Ministerial Conference in November 2000. It brings together OCTs with representation in Brussels and includes the Falkland Islands, French Polynesia, Greenland, the Netherlands Antilles and Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon. It was set up to provide a forum for dialogue and exchange of information and best practices, advise governments in the OCTs and the related EU Member States, and develop effective working relationships, as a group, with the EU institutions, the ACP-Group and its Secretariat, and other relevant international, multi-lateral and regional organisations and institutions. Some of its work is relevant to biodiversity.

3.4. Between the overseas entities and their geographic regions

In geographic regions, there are very complex landscapes of decision-making bodies and mechanisms at a range of levels. Generally, the participation of, and more so the benefit to, overseas entities in these bodies and mechanisms are patchy.

The patterns of regional participation typically reflect the geopolitical complexity of each region and the unique status of overseas entities. Different overseas entities groupings participate in various bodies and there are only a few amongst the plethora of regional bodies in which they all participate alongside the independent states (noticeable exceptions are the Association of Caribbean States and the Regional Activity Centre of the SPAW Protocol in the Caribbean, as well as the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific, in particular the Pacific Regional Environment Programme). In several instances, the regional mechanisms and groupings reflect linguistic and former colonial groupings and still fail to adopt an ecosystem-wide approach and to promote broadly inclusive regional integration. In addition, overseas entities are not formally represented in UN regional meetings such as those of Regional Fisheries Management Organisations, where they are represented by the EU Member State, but can be part of that State delegation.

There are a number of constraints to the involvement of overseas entities in regional mechanisms, including structural obstacles to their participation in meetings and programmes, a perception of limited benefits to be gained from participation, and a

³ The Message of La Reunion, the outcome of the Reunion conference convened by IUCN, the Government of France, the Regional Council of the Island of la Reunion and ONERC in July 2008, is the first strategic document providing an integrated approach to biodiversity and climate change in EU overseas entities, with recommendations for all actors including governments, the EU and civil society.

frequent disconnect between policy and implementation, with different funding mechanisms in support of policy development and programme implementation between Small island developing States and overseas entities. Overseas entities have strong links to the respective EU States, and in many cases this has suppressed the need for regional integration. Language barriers and geographic isolation are additional factors that prevent regional integration.

While there are a number of constraints to the participation of EU overseas entities in regional processes, there are also significant opportunities, building on the need for ecosystem wide perspectives and for joint efforts to address common issues and needs. A number of entities have good technical expertise in biodiversity and climate change related areas due to their close links to the EU Member State, and these links could be made available and could form the basis for closer collaboration and integration with their regional neighbours, as is the case in some projects supported by the European Commission through the INTERREG programme. By the same token, ORs and OCTs have a lot to learn from their regional neighbours, for example on decentralised management of natural resources such as community-based and participatory approaches, and on linkages between biodiversity conservation, livelihoods and socio-economic development.

3.5. Between the overseas entities and the EU institutions

The European Union recognises two types of overseas entities, the Outermost Regions which are an integral part of the European Union and where the Directives of the European Commission apply, and the Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) which are not part of the European Union but benefit from an association with the EU under part IV of the Treaty of the Union, where European Commission Directives do not apply. The OCTs qualify for European Development Fund (EDF) grants.

The relationship between overseas entities and EU institutions is complex. EU policies and programmes for biodiversity and climate change are administered by the Commission's Directorate-General (DG) Environment, whilst policies and programmes targeted at ORs and OCTs are administered by the DG Regions and the DG Development respectively, making coordination essential.

Dedicated EU policies and programmes for ORs and OCTs have placed limited emphasis on nature conservation to date, whilst policies and programmes for biodiversity and climate change have not necessarily prioritised EU overseas entities, despite their significant contribution to the biodiversity of Europe.

The basis for the action of EU Member States to safeguard habitats and species is provided by the EU Birds and Habitats Directives (Nature Directives). Action to meet the targets of the Nature Directives is funded through the DG Environment.

Over the last six years, efforts have been made to establish a new voluntary scheme to extend the Birds and Habitats Directive to the overseas entities. Under the proposed scheme known as Biodiversity Ecosystem Services for the EU Overseas Territories (BEST), OCTs would nominate sites to become part of the Natura 2000 network of protected sites. If nominated and accepted on the list, there would be funding provided to manage the sites. To date this is the only proposed approach for DG Environment funding to the OCTs. The review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy post 2010 and other biodiversity related EU policies currently under way may provide opportunities to ensure adequate consideration of EU ORs and OCTs biodiversity in future EU programmes.

Following the 2008 Communiqué “*Outermost regions: an advantage for Europe*”, the launch of the policy document known as *Europe 2020* and the development of an EU 2020 strategy, there is a recognition of the place of ORs in Europe’s in future policies and programmes. The potentialities of ORs, including their environmental assets as wealth opportunities and benefits to the European Union, as well as the specific challenges they face, are informing the review of EU regional policies post 2013. An example of how these new approaches might be implemented in practice is the *Memorandum of Understanding between the governments of France, Spain, Portugal and the Presidents of ORs of Canary Islands, Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Madeira, Martinique and Reunion (May 2010)* for a renewed vision of the European Strategy for ORs. The review of the Association Decision, which governs the relationship between the European Union and OCTs under the Treaty of Lisbon, is also recasting that relationship from a development perspective towards a partnership approach.

These developments may create opportunities for greater consideration of biodiversity and climate change in future EU policies and collaboration between EU Member States, ORs and OCTs, and the EU institutions.

3.6. Between overseas entities and global networks

Because the large majority of the EU overseas entities are islands, there are obvious opportunities for their participation in global islands networks. They cannot however be formally involved in the global Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), which is the main channel through which the voice of small islands can be heard in UN processes, as AOSIS membership is limited to independent States. The main opportunities for the involvement of EU overseas entities at the global level are therefore provided by the IUCN Global Programmes (Global Islands Programme and Programme on EU overseas entities) or through the Global Islands Partnership (GLISPA).

4 Critical issues

While the Convention on Biological Diversity legally applies to most of the overseas entities attached to EU Member States, these States do not fully discharge their responsibilities towards the Convention in relation to the biological diversity of their overseas entities and there are, as a result, large and important areas of biological diversity that potentially are left without the benefit of adequate policies and programmes. This can be attributed to four main gaps:

- *a constitutional and institutional gap:* most EU overseas entities are included in the ratification of the Convention by the EU Member State they are attached to, and hence are implicitly covered by the provisions of the Convention. There are however cases of EU OCTs that have effectively been excluded by the process of ratification by the Party; for example, the United Kingdom has only three overseas territories specifically included in the ratification of the Convention;
- *a policy gap:* even when ratification fully applies to the overseas entities, the instruments put in place by the EU Member State (National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and National Reports) do not always provide adequate coverage of the overseas entities. This manifests itself principally at three levels: (a) in the relationship between the EU Member State and its overseas entities, as national policies and plans are in several instances not translated at local level or competency is delegated, (b) within geographic

regions, because overseas entities do not fully participate in regional processes and institutions, and (c) within the overseas entities themselves, because the frequent absence of biodiversity policy and planning instruments means that biodiversity considerations and objectives are not mainstreamed in local development processes. In cases where there is an instrument of ratification that is specific to the overseas entity (i.e. Aruba, Netherlands Antilles, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, and Saint Helena - Ascension - Tristan da Cunha), there is no channel of communication and reporting between the overseas entity and the CBD, and no effort is being made to ensure that strategic and action planning as well as reporting are done in accordance with the provisions of the Convention;

- *a resource gap*, which is largely the product of the constitutional, institutional and policy gaps mentioned above. Specific factors responsible for the inadequate and insufficient financing of biodiversity conservation in overseas entities include: (a) limited priority given to, and capacity available for, investment at the local level in biodiversity conservation, particularly in OCTs, (b) insufficient investment by the EU Member State to support the development and implementation of biodiversity action plans and equivalent, (c) the ineligibility of ORs and OCTs to international funding assistance specifically available for the implementation of the CBD, as they are not Parties to the Convention; (d) the conditions of access by OCTs to EU funding, and the fact that the significant EU structural funds made available to the ORs do not place much emphasis on biodiversity and (e) limited access to private and public development assistance, because of the status of association with the EU. There is therefore very little coherence between the various funding mechanisms, and by default an excessive reliance on scarce local resources for biodiversity conservation. The small size of institutions and the lack of a “critical mass” of expertise makes it also particularly difficult to access large-scale funding such as that available from the European Commission;
- *an implementation gap*, because the disconnect between planning and implementation, which has been identified as a challenge for CBD and NBSAP implementation in many countries, is, in the case of overseas entities, often exacerbated by physical distance and remoteness from the EU Member State. Limited capacity and guidance at the local level, the absence of dedicated funding, and more generally the lack of a local integrated biodiversity strategy further undermine implementation effectiveness.

Because of their peculiar status, the overseas countries and territories (OCTs) are not eligible to the kind of technical and financial support that their geographic neighbours receive, even when their needs and conditions are often very similar.

Because of their dependent status, the OCTs do not participate in the various processes relevant to SIDS and cannot access funding from multi-lateral or bi-lateral development agencies such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF), which is the financial mechanism of the CBD.

At the same time, access to European Union development cooperation funds for OCTs have been small compared to those available to their SIDS counterparts. In addition, the traditional development cooperation relationship between OCTs and the EU has been ill fitted to the circumstances of OCTs.

As noted above, the review of the EU Association Decision, which governs the relationship between the EU and OCTs, might lead to a more integrated and arguably equitable relationship with regards to biodiversity policy development and practice in OCTs, the EU and globally.

In spite of these constraints, the overseas entities have been able to make remarkable progress towards the achievement of the goals and targets of the CBD POW on Island Biodiversity, and their achievements need to be better recognised and their efforts more effectively supported.

This is particularly true in the case of the OCTs, which find themselves in a peculiar situation in relation to the CBD and other multi-lateral environmental agreements (MEAs), but have in several instances achieved more than the EU Member State of which they are part, with comprehensive legislation, integrated systems of protected areas and broad awareness programmes.

This contribution is made more critical and strategic at regional level, as many overseas entities share very similar challenges and circumstances with neighbouring developing countries, reducing the opportunities for regional collaboration.

While it is clear that much has been and is being achieved in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use in the EU overseas entities, the absence of explicit local strategies and action plans aligned to and consistent with the CBD creates a number of challenges and exacerbates a number of issues that are detrimental to effective conservation and management of the biological diversity of these entities, especially because:

- in the absence of comprehensive strategies, too little attention is being paid to the need for integrating and mainstreaming conservation in development planning, and conservation is approached as a distinct sector, with most of the efforts being concentrated on classical instruments such as protected areas;
- even when significant progress is being made in protected area planning and management, it is rarely based on a systematic and strategic approach to maintaining representative ecosystems;
- less attention is therefore being paid to important aspects and objectives that are important in the Convention but where limited experience and capacity exists, such as *ex situ* conservation, the protection of traditional knowledge, the conservation of genetic diversity or conditions of access to resources and sharing of benefits;
- also, in the absence of explicit strategies, there is no ranking of priority, and efforts are more collections of separate activities than well-designed and comprehensive programmes aimed at tackling priority issues in a strategic manner;
- the lack of a strategic framework is also often responsible for funding constraints, as there are less opportunities to seek resources specifically for the purpose of biodiversity management, and there are no clear investment priorities;
- finally, well designed strategies provide useful monitoring and evaluation frameworks. The overseas entities that do not have explicit biodiversity strategies and/or action plans are less able to monitor progress and adapt management practices, actions and investments to changing circumstances.

Even when strategies and action plans exist, they present very common weaknesses:

- there is no funding allocation specifically dedicated to a BAP, and there are insufficient financial commitments made by the national or local agencies;
- the BAPs that exist are often more a collection of actions than real strategies – in some cases the local BAPs were actually written on the basis of pre-existing actions, and did not add much value to the on-going work of national and local agencies;
- the processes used in the development of local plans and strategies are often locally perceived as imposed by the national agencies and do not allow for effective participation and a sense of ownership by local actors.

In the absence of a strategy developed and owned by institutions in the overseas entity, the requirement of compliance with CBD is either not recognised, or it is perceived as top-down and externally-driven. Many important actors in conservation and sustainable development in the overseas entities are remarkably unaware of the CBD and its provisions, and are therefore not necessarily committed to policies and actions that would contribute to meeting its overall objectives as well as the goals and targets of its relevant programmes of work. And when the CBD is known, it is unfortunately too often seen as the source of an imposed framework, not as an opportunity to contribute strategically to local and global objectives.

Efficiency and effectiveness in conservation and management of biological diversity in the overseas entities, and especially in the OCTs, are hampered by the complexity of institutional arrangements at the central level. While this observation does not apply to the ORs, because they have an institutional framework that is almost identical to that of other parts of the EU Member State to which they belong, the situation is far more complex and complicated for the OCTs, because of cases of overlapping responsibilities between the various levels of governance.

While there are a few positive examples of collaboration and synergies within geographic regions, overseas entities remain generally isolated from their geographic regions, and this is detrimental to effective implementation of the CBD in the overseas entities and in these geographic regions. Regional cooperation should be perceived, by all actors, as both a responsibility and an opportunity. It is the responsibility of any State present in a geographic region to ensure that conservation is achieved, as effectively and efficiently as possible, in that region, and therefore to allow for the mobilisation of all available resources and for the adoption of an ecosystem-based approach to management. Regional cooperation is also an opportunity, for all actors, to share and benefit from their respective skills and resources, and build common platforms. At present, this responsibility is not properly assumed, and an opportunity is regrettably being missed.

5 Principles to guide future action

In light of the significant progress made at national and local levels in advancing biodiversity conservation and in placing these efforts within the framework of the CBD, and taking into account the gaps and challenges identified above, there are many opportunities to address outstanding issues and enhance the effectiveness of conservation initiatives in the EU overseas entities. The planned review of the CBD's Programme of Work on Island Biodiversity over the period 2010 – 2012 provides an important opportunity to address the issues that have prevented the full participation of EU overseas entities in global conservation agreements, and to facilitate the development of innovative mechanisms that would allow these entities to benefit fully from, and contribute effectively to, these processes.

A number of guiding principles should therefore be considered:

- ORs and OCTs are important to global biodiversity and their participation along side EU Member State and Small island developing States (SIDS) as well as neighbouring countries, including least developing countries (LDC), in regions of high biodiversity is critical to achieve the global goals of the CBD;
- in light of the global significance of their biodiversity, conservation and adaptation to climate change in the EU overseas entities should be approached as a shared responsibility between the CBD, the EU, other international organisations and instruments, EU Member States, regional actors, and local institutions and communities to ensure global commitments to halt biodiversity loss in those entities are met in the CBD post 2010;
- ORs and OCTs bring a unique experience in biodiversity conservation which can be shared and enhanced, particularly at the regional level, building on existing CBD and other processes, and acknowledging the need for flexible mechanisms;
- the experience of the EU overseas entities, which have in many instances achieved significant progress in spite of the absence of a comprehensive policy framework, confirms the value of local initiative and of decentralised and locally-driven processes, because they enhance effectiveness, build a sense of ownership, and promote sustainability;
- in contexts such as those of the ORs and OCTs, biodiversity takes a special value and significance, as the basis for economic development, but also as a key element of local and regional identity and patrimony, and should be promoted as such;
- an ecosystem based approach to biodiversity conservation issues (e.g. invasive species, protection of marine biodiversity), as advocated by the CBD, can only be effective if cooperative mechanisms bringing together all actors are in place to address them;
- there is a continued need for awareness:
 - by ORs and OCTs of the value of their biological diversity and the benefit of placing their efforts within the global framework offered by the CBD;
 - by EU Member States, of the value of biological diversity in ORs and OCTs, and of their responsibility to help conserve that biodiversity, within the framework of the CBD;
 - by the EU institutions, of the role they can and should play in supporting biodiversity conservation in overseas entities, and of the need for appropriate and effective legal and financing instruments;
 - by all Parties to the CBD, and the CBD Secretariat, of the imperative to incorporate fully the EU overseas entities within the programmes of work and the various mechanisms put in place by the Convention.

6 Recommendations

6.1. Recommendations in relation to EU institutions

In light of the scope and impact of EU biodiversity policies, of the fact that many of these policies are relevant and applicable to ORs and OCTs and of the recommendations from the Message from Reunion Island, the European Union and its institutions, especially the European Commission, should consider the establishment of an integrated policy framework for EU overseas entities and should play a central role in ensuring relevance and coherence between EU policies and the CBD's post-2010 revised and updated strategic plan.

Specifically, the EU and its institutions are encouraged to:

- ensure that EU policies and directives give due attention to biodiversity conservation in overseas entities (e.g. EU Biodiversity Strategy post 2010, EU Maritime Strategy, EU Marine Policy, EU Regional Policy) in future policies and programmes;
- take steps to harmonise EU policies and programmes relevant to biodiversity conservation with those targeted at ORs and OCTs across the European Commission;
- explore the desirability and feasibility of developing a mechanism for dialogue and coordination between EU member states, the EC and overseas entities to guide and facilitate the integration of biodiversity and climate change adaptation in EU overseas entities into the EC sectoral policies and programmes, consistent with international environmental agreements, in this instance, the CBD strategic plan and the programmes of work of the CBD in those entities, and cognisant of initiatives such as the Memorandum of Understanding between France, Spain and Portugal and Outermost Regions for an EU strategy for ORs, and the process of review of the Association Decision for OCTs;
- ensure that adequate funds are directed at biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation in ORs and OCTs in the overall EU investment portfolio and facilitate access by ORs and OCTs to information on funding opportunities and targeted assistance in the development and implementation of integrated proposals for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development;
- take advantage of the upcoming 2014-2020 budgeting process to include a programme specifically dedicated to the EU overseas entities in the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) and the financing instrument for development cooperation;
- facilitate and support, through regional Delegations and programmes, integrated regional approaches to biodiversity conservation and climate change in line with CBD principles, goals and targets;
- demonstrate leadership in international fora related to biodiversity conservation through EU-funded work in support of regional integrated programmes;
- improve mechanisms to consult overseas entities and involve them, as appropriate, in the policy processes and programmes that are relevant to them;

- resource the implementation of the BEST initiative (identified as a priority in the Message from Reunion Island) as a mechanism that can help overseas entities enhance the effectiveness of their conservation programmes;
- adapt the Birds and Habitats Directives, and especially their annexes, in order to incorporate the French ORs, which are not presently covered, and the OCTs;
- develop processes to ensure that development projects supported by the European Commission are assessed with regard to their social and environmental impacts, at the identification and evaluation stages, and incorporate mitigation and compensation schemes when necessary.

6.2. Recommendations to EU Member States

In order to integrate their overseas entities into processes and mechanisms that exist under the auspices of the CBD, the EU Member States concerned should:

- ensure that their commitments and actions under the terms of the CBD include, whenever possible and appropriate, their respective overseas entities (including those that are uninhabited and that contain, as in the case of the BIOT, important and rich biological resources);
- ensure, in close collaboration with the Secretariat of the CBD, that stakeholders in overseas entities are well informed and aware of the Convention, its post-2010 revised and updated strategic plan, and the processes and requirements for implementing it at the local level;
- encourage, facilitate and support the formulation, wherever these do not exist yet, of local strategies and action plans that are consistent with national policy and CBD commitments. Local and national strategies and action plans should be aligned to the CBD and its Programme of work on Island Biodiversity (for all insular overseas entities) and to the Programme of work on Forests (for French Guiana), and should be participatory in their approach;
- allow for OCT representation at, participation in, and inputs into, official meetings convened under the auspices of the CBD and other MEAs, particularly at the regional level.

In order to facilitate regional integration and cooperation processes, the EU Member States concerned should:

- collaborate with and support the design and implementation of regional projects that originate within one or several ORs or OCTs and involve their geographic neighbours;
- include, whenever possible and appropriate, representation from ORs and OCTs in relevant regional decision-making forums;
- coordinate national programmes with on-going and proposed regional programmes, for example by ensuring that there is an allocation towards the financial participation of local departments and staff in regional work or that local governments negotiate with the EU Member State for funding to facilitate their participation.

6.3. Recommendations to actors in ORs and OCTs

Institutions in the ORs and OCTs should play a lead role in facilitating their own participation in relevant regional mechanisms and processes, and in supporting these. This could be done by:

- leading or contributing to the design and implementation of regional projects that originate within one or several ORs or OCTs and involve their geographic neighbours;
- advocating for their participation and representation in relevant regional decision-making forums;
- negotiating with their EU Member State for funding to facilitate their participation in on-going and proposed regional policy fora and programmes.

6.4. Recommendations to regional institutions

Regional institutions should make every effort, consistent with their mandate and rules, to facilitate the formal and informal participation and representation of the ORs and OCTs located in their respective regions. This could be done by:

- encouraging their State members and partners to include representation and facilitate participation of ORs and OCTs in meetings and programmes;
- including actors in public agencies and civil society in the overseas entities on their mailing lists and communication networks;
- utilising, whenever possible and relevant, the expertise available in overseas entities in support of multi-lateral and bi-lateral programmes and projects in their regions.

6.5. Recommendations to the CBD

The Convention of Biological Diversity, through its COP and its Secretariat, should encourage the six State Parties concerned:

- to ensure adequate coverage of the overseas entities in their NBSAPs, their national reports and other planning and reporting instruments;
- to involve relevant actors in the overseas entities in the formulation or revision of strategies and action plans as well as the preparation of national reports, in order to ensure that these planning and reporting processes reflect the needs and commitments of these local actors;
- to develop a specific strategy and/or action plan for their respective overseas entities, and to provide for the formulation and implementation of strategies and/or actions plans at the level of each OR and OCT, as applicable.

The Conference of Parties should also explore the desirability and feasibility of including, within the Programme of work on Island Biodiversity, a specific objective and specific actions aimed at harmonising policy and legislation within selected regions, notably the hotspots of island biodiversity.

The CBD and its Secretariat should also increase their support to regional cooperation and the involvement of EU overseas entities in the geographic regions in which they are located by:

- inviting institutions and representatives of overseas entities, whenever possible and relevant, through the appropriate channels, to regional events and activities;
- strengthen, or establish whenever they do not yet exist, formal partnerships with regional institutions and mechanisms such as SPREP and CEP-SPAW.

The proposed Plan of Action on Sub-national Governments, Cities and other Local Authorities, to be examined at COP 10 under agenda item 4.9, provides an opportunity to address many of the challenges and opportunities discussed in this document.

6.6. Recommendations to GLISPA

The Global Islands Partnership is a unique platform that gives equal voice to all islands, regardless of their status, and it can play a unique role in facilitating the involvement of overseas entities and their institutions in global and regional processes. This can be achieved in particular through a more systematic involvement of leaders and representatives from overseas entities in events and policy formulation exercises (with the concomitant encouragement to leaders in overseas entities to become more involved in GLISPA and act as ambassadors on behalf of biodiversity in these entities).

6.7. Recommendations to IUCN

Building on its past and current work in support of biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation in EU overseas entities, IUCN should:

- facilitate communication and exchanges between EU ORs and OCTs within and between regions;
- work with partners to facilitate the incorporation of EU overseas entities biodiversity issues in international and EU fora, including through the development and implementation of an action plan to operationalise the Message of Reunion Island;
- collaborate with the CBD secretariat and EU Member States to facilitate the participation of overseas entities in the review of the CBD's Programme of work on Island Biodiversity, to develop and adapt CBD tools and convene, in collaboration with regional institutions, as appropriate, capacity building activities and awareness programmes on CBD in ORs and OCTs;
- collaborate with, and provide support to, the organisations that are specifically dedicated to biodiversity conservation in the EU overseas entities, especially those, such as DCNA, JNCC, the French National Committee for IUCN or the UKOTCF, that play a critical role in facilitating networking and collaboration among ORs and OCTs;

- encourage and support the participation of institutions in EU overseas entities in the work of GLISPA and encourage a more frequent use of the French and Spanish language in the work of the Partnership;
- give consideration to the opportunity of using the conclusions of this review as the basis for a consultation with EU Member States concerned and with their overseas entities in order to formulate a plan of action aimed at facilitating the participation of these entities in the processes and activities facilitated by GLISPA;
- encourage and enable the IUCN Regional Offices and Programmes concerned to facilitate the participation of IUCN members and other actors from the overseas entities in activities and processes in their respective regions.

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Appendix 1: Status of CBD Implementation in Greenland (Denmark)⁴

Current status

The Kingdom of Denmark consists of Denmark and the self-governing areas of Greenland and the Faeroe Islands. Greenland has an elected Parliament and Government. It is associated to the European Union as an OCT. The Government of Greenland has full management responsibility over several sectors including biodiversity and other living resources, while responsibilities such as foreign affairs, defence and justice are shared with Denmark.

Greenland is located in the Arctic region. The total area is 2.1 million km², making it the world's largest island. The central part of Greenland is ice-covered (85 %), and only around 410.500 km² is ice-free during the summer. Climate spans from low (sub) arctic in the south to high arctic in the north, and it is the climate that is the main determinant of distribution patterns of flora and fauna. These patterns are however also influenced by altitude as well as location in relation to the coast.

The Kingdom of Denmark is a Party to the Convention of Biological Diversity, and its ratification of the CBD applies to Greenland and the Faeroe Islands. As an autonomous part of the Kingdom of Denmark, Greenland has separate planning and reporting arrangements with the CBD. Its Fourth National Report was submitted in January 2010.

Institutional arrangements, policies and conservation actions

In accordance with the requirements of Article 6 (a) of the CBD, Greenland has in the recent years paid attention to different actions to secure the implementation of the Convention. In 1999, a comprehensive report on Greenland's ecosystem was compiled by the Greenland Institute of Natural Resources (GINR), called "The Biodiversity of Greenland – a country study".

In 2003, a new Nature Protection Act (Landstings Act no 29 of 18 December 2003 on the Protection of Nature) was adopted. The Act meets a number of obligations arising from Denmark's ratification of the CBD. The overall objective of the law is to conserve biological diversity, including genes, habitats, species and ecosystems and to ensure sustainable exploitation of natural resources. The main objective is to support the Government of Greenland in its implementation of the Convention and other relevant international agreements and to conserve Greenland's biodiversity.

Greenland's NBSAP was finalised and approved in 2009. The main objective of this new NBSAP is to support the Government of Greenland in its implementation of the CBD and other relevant international agreements. The NBSAP includes a number of recommendations and actions to be implemented in two phases: the short term (1-2 years) and the long term (5 years). Each recommendation has been assigned one of three priority categories, thus providing a basis for prioritisation of available funds from the Government of Greenland and external funding mechanisms. The NBSAP is to be used directly by the central administration in Greenland, but it can also be used to initiate externally supported projects aimed at biodiversity conservation and natural resource management in Greenland.

Recommendations and actions contained in the NBSAP relate to nature protection, sustainable use, resource monitoring, administration and reporting procedures, information and outreach initiatives, capacity building and other areas, in accordance

⁴ This section is based on the Fourth National Report on the Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity submitted by the Government of Greenland in 2009.

with the provisions of the CBD. Recommendations and actions are directed at the main national conservation institution (the Ministry of Domestic Affairs, Nature and Environment), but they also concern other ministries and public institutions, municipalities and non-state actors. The NBSAP provides for the establishment of a steering committee chaired by the Ministry of Domestic Affairs, Nature and Environment, with responsibility for coordinating and monitoring NBSAP implementation.

The primary responsibility for research on biodiversity in Greenland rests with the GINR. The Institute provides biological advice, including recommended sustainable harvest levels, to the Government of Greenland, municipalities and other actors. By law, the purpose of the Institute is, among others, to provide the scientific basis for the sustainable use of natural resources as well for the protection of the environment and biological diversity. The aims of the GINR include the incorporation of local knowledge in the scientific work and an open dialogue with the Greenlandic community. This is achieved through community meetings, consultation and collaboration with relevant organisations and outreach via publications, press releases and a website (www.natur.gl).

Funding for GINR research and monitoring activities is provided by an annual budget allocation from the Government of Greenland, supplemented by external funding mechanisms, including the Danish Environmental Support Programme for Environmental Cooperation in the Arctic – DANCEA. DANCEA is a funding mechanism that has now existed for more than 15 years. It supports short-term research and conservation projects in a range of domains, including the prevention of pollution, climate research, protection and sustainable use of natural resources, health issues, and indigenous peoples.

Main conclusions

Some of the Greenlandic species did show a decline during the last decades, particularly because of unsustainable hunting, which has been identified as one of the major threats. During the past few years, efforts have been made to secure sustainable hunting by following scientific guidelines on the game species, resulting in a significant increase in some populations. The harvest of many marine mammal species is regulated in executive orders and follows biological harvest advice on sustainable use. There is, however, a need to constantly monitor harvests of non-regulated species to assess whether additional regulation is needed.

Generally, significant progress has been made in recent years towards the conservation of biodiversity in Greenland. The development of management plans for protected areas and local awareness are given very high priority by local authorities. There is however a critical need to identify or confirm conservation priorities and to secure the protection of areas important for biodiversity. Greenland has initiated such a project that will identify national conservation priorities, develop a national strategy for monitoring protected areas, formulate management plans for specific areas, and conduct awareness activities. The main obstacles encountered in the implementation of the CBD and other international agreements are identified as the lack of financial and human resources.

Appendix 2: Executive Summary, National Study of France⁵

Presentation

The twelve French overseas entities (Martinique, Guadeloupe, Saint-Martin, Saint-Barthélemy, French Guiana, Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon, La Réunion, Mayotte, Terres Australes et Antarctiques Françaises – TAAF, New Caledonia, Wallis-et-Futuna, and French Polynesia) offer a great geographic diversity. They are located in the three large oceans of the world (Atlantic, Pacific and Indian), from the equatorial to the polar zone. All but *Terre Adélie* and French Guiana are islands.

At the beginning of 2010, the combined population of these entities was estimated at 2 653 942 inhabitants, or 4% of the total French population. Population densities vary greatly, with Mayotte, Martinique, La Réunion, Guadeloupe, Saint-Martin and Saint-Barthélemy being highly populated (with densities over 230/km²), while others have densities that are below 80/km². The TAAF are uninhabited, but are regularly visited by scientific teams that reside there during their missions.

The ecological richness of these entities is exceptional. Over a total territory representing one fourth of metropolitan France, they are home to more species in all groups. If one considers only the endemic species, there are 26 times more species of plants, 3.5 times more species of molluscs, over 100 times more species of freshwater fish and 60 times more species of birds in the overseas entities than in metropolitan France.

With 756 globally threatened species present on its territory, France is among the ten countries of the world that are most directly concerned by the threat. These overseas entities are home to several species threatened with extinction. This is the case in particular in New Caledonia and French Polynesia, with respectively 355 and 149 threatened species according to the criteria of the IUCN Red List.

Ratification of the Convention on Biological Diversity

France ratified the CBD in 1994, and adopted a national biodiversity strategy in 2004. This strategy has focused on the objective set by the European Commission to halt the loss of biological diversity by 2010. It is structured around eleven sectoral plans, including one specifically dedicated to ORs and OCTs. This national plan for overseas entities spells out specific objectives that local action plans are expected to implement in each entity. Indeed, all entities have formulated their own action plan, except Saint-Martin and Saint-Barthélemy that are part of the action plan for Guadeloupe.

Biodiversity conservation policies

At the time of CBD ratification, France became a Party on behalf of all its entities. The implementation of biodiversity conservation actions in the overseas entities however differs according to the legal status of each entity. Two situations can be found with respect to mandates in biodiversity in overseas entities:

⁵ This is the Executive Summary of a report submitted by the *Comité français de l'UICN* to IUCN and entitled *Contribution à l'évaluation de la mise en œuvre de la Convention sur la diversité biologique dans l'outre-mer européen, Bilan de la mise en œuvre de la Stratégie nationale pour la biodiversité en outre-mer*, draft version of September 2010.

- in the *départements d'outre-mer (DOM)*, in the *collectivité territoriale* of Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon, in the *collectivité départementale* of Mayotte and in the TAAF the French State is the authority over nature conservation;
- in the OCTs that have a specific autonomous status (French Polynesia, New Caledonia, and Wallis-et-Futuna), biodiversity conservation is a local competency. Local authorities therefore adopt their own laws, taking inspiration from the provisions of national laws. Saint-Barthélemy does not have a specific plan for biodiversity, but it has its own environmental code.

In the second of these two cases, implementation is different. The strategic document formulated locally must be in conformity with national objectives, but implementation is done in accordance with local legislation. France can provide incentives through the financing of specific actions.

Main conclusions

The ratification of the CDB by all EU countries represents a major step towards biodiversity conservation. Through its ratification of the Convention in 1994 and the subsequent formulation of a national biodiversity strategy, France has, for the first time, integrated the challenges of overseas entities into a national policy of biodiversity conservation, with an action plan specifically dedicated to these entities.

This action plan for overseas entities has however not taken into account all the objectives of the CBD's Programme of Work on Island Biodiversity. Access to and sharing of benefits, sustainable development, climate change and pollution, all areas where there are important CDB targets, were not covered.

International commitments have not been entirely fulfilled, as biodiversity has been only partially addressed, through the maintenance of species and ecosystems, but without sufficient integration into sectoral policies (agriculture, mining, infrastructure, etc.) that are responsible in particular for pollution and fragmentation of ecosystems. The promotion of sustainable development and the participation of civil society are critical elements in the formulation of any strategic document, but these were not fully reflected in the national strategy.

Funding has been allocated to the implementation of actions, but these financial commitments came after the *Grenelle de l'environnement* organised in 2007, as they were allocated to agencies in 2009, five years after the adoption of the first local plans. Before that time, there was no budget allocation attached to the plan for overseas entities. The *Grenelle de l'environnement* has been a vehicle for significant progress and it has facilitated the implementation of the national strategy in the overseas entities, for example through the launch of species conservation plans (national action plans) presently being implemented in Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guiana, La Réunion and the TAAF. The OCTs are however lagging behind in these important processes.

In addition, the local action plans have been formulated by public sector agencies without involving all relevant stakeholders. While local conservation civil society organisations have participated in consultations, the local assemblies (*conseils régionaux* and *conseils généraux*) of the DOMs have in most cases not been involved.

The exercise in local strategy formulation has often been limited to the listing of actions to be implemented, without ranking according to priority challenges, and without local coherence. In addition, the formulation of local strategies should have

been accompanied by the identification of quantitative and qualitative indicators that would allow for permanent monitoring of the impact of actions on the overall objective of halting biodiversity loss, with results validated by a monitoring committee. However, implementation has not been regularly monitored, and this is true at both local and national levels: local institutions, except in the case of French Polynesia and Guadeloupe, did not set up a local monitoring committee, while, at the national level, the committee has met only once over the five-year period, and only with some of its members.

Following the implementation of the action plan for overseas entities, some encouraging results can be noted, such as the establishment of new protected areas (*Parc Amazonien de Guyane*, *Parc National de La Réunion*, *Réserve naturelle des Terres australes*, *Parc naturel marin de Mayotte* and inclusion of the reefs of New Caledonia as well as the *Pitons, Cirques et Remparts de La Réunion* on the World Heritage List) or the formulation of strategies to fight alien invasive species. From 2011, the new national strategy for biodiversity in overseas entities will have to involve better all stakeholders, at both local and national levels, and will have to formulate operational and costed objectives, with periodic monitoring and evaluation of results.

Appendix 3: Executive Summary, National Study of the Netherlands⁶

Current status

The Dutch Caribbean consists of the Leeward Islands (Aruba, Bonaire and Curacao) and the Windward Islands (Sint Maarten, Sint Eustatius and Saba). The total land area covers 990 km² and the total population is 305.000. There is one Kingdom of the Netherlands which consists of three States: the Netherlands, Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles.

The Constitution of the Kingdom of the Netherlands will change on 10 October 2010, when the autonomous country of the Netherlands Antilles will be dismantled, with Curacao and Sint Maarten becoming autonomous countries within the Kingdom with a status comparable to that of Aruba, while Bonaire, Sint Eustatius and Saba (known as the BES islands) will become part of the Netherlands as a special municipality. The decision-making structure will remain the same as it is at present, with the autonomous countries having their own nature conservation and biodiversity policy. The Kingdom will have more direct and explicit responsibility for the BES Islands, in light of their new status.

Institutional arrangements, policies and conservation actions

International treaties fall under the responsibility of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, with signature and ratification always stating for which parts of the Kingdom a particular instrument is valid. The Netherlands Antilles and Aruba have ratified the CBD. They do not have national biodiversity strategies and plans in line with the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Both Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles have nature conservation legislation which is consistent with CITES and the SPAW Protocol. Policy and planning for nature conservation in both countries are however somewhat weak. The Antilles have a nature policy plan, but implementation is left to the island (local) governments, with each government expected to draft its own nature conservation and zoning legislation and being responsible for implementation. These islands do not have a nature conservation plan, except for Bonaire, but the time frame of that plan expired in 2004.

Both Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles have extensive fisheries regulations. The regulations of the Netherlands Antilles apply to the EEZ, which includes the large and biologically rich Saba Bank. Curacao and Saba have island-specific fisheries legislation that applies to the waters within the 12 mile zone. In Bonaire some fisheries measures are included in nature conservation laws.

In the Government of the Netherlands Antilles, a Department of Environment and Nature was established in 1995. On Aruba and the islands of the Antilles tasks and responsibilities related to nature conservation are allocated to various government departments. The issue of nature conservation is not high on the political agenda, resulting in a limited government budget for this sector.

An important instrument of nature conservation is the establishment of nature and marine parks on the islands, and this is an area where the Dutch Caribbean has made much progress and has acquired extremely valuable experience. All protected

⁶ This is the Executive Summary of a report submitted by CURCONSULT of Curacao to IUCN and entitled *Review of the Status of Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and of Biodiversity Action Plans in the European Union Overseas Entities, Report on the Netherlands and the Dutch Caribbean*, draft version of September 2010.

areas are managed by NGOs which are financed by entrance fees, dive tags and some government subsidies. Some of the parks have a formal status; others have not been officially declared but are still under some form of active management.

Capacity is one of the main constraints to effective biodiversity conservation in the Dutch Caribbean. Nature conservation on each of the islands depends on a small number of staff members, employed by different departments, with limited financial resources and insufficient coordination. Some training programmes have however been set up for protected area rangers to manage nature and marine parks, and collaboration among the territories is facilitated by the DCNA.

As a contribution to CBD implementation, inventories of species have been made on the islands. Research on marine, coastal and terrestrial biodiversity is conducted primarily by Caribbean Research and Management of Biodiversity (CARMABI), a competent and experienced research organisation and station that is also involved in protected area management.

The main results obtained and impacts made towards the achievement of the goals and targets of the CBD's Programme of Work on Island Biodiversity in the Dutch Caribbean can be summarised as follows:

#	CBD objectives	Results or impacts
1	Promote the conservation of biological diversity of island ecosystems, habitats and biomes	More than 10% of the land area is conserved by having nature parks except for Sint Maarten. The BES-islands have marine parks established.
2	Promote the conservation of island species diversity	Inventories of species have been made in the Netherlands Antilles, to a large extent as result of the CDB. In some areas, especially in Aruba, there still are some blanks.
3	Promote the conservation of island genetic diversity	There is no programme to conserve and maintain local landraces of agricultural crops, nor is there any programme to conserve the local Criollo pig breed(s).
4	Promote sustainable use and consumption	Sustainable use and consumption of islands biodiversity-based products is relevant only to the fisheries sector. In all islands of the Antilles the fish stock has reduced significantly. One of the richest fishing grounds of the Antilles, the Saba Bank, faces reduction of its stocks despite strict management and control.
5	Pressure from habitat loss, land-use change and degradation and sustainable water use is reduced.	Natural habitats are under pressure, especially in coastal areas as a result of infrastructure development. In Curacao this is protected by zoning laws, on the BES-islands this is less relevant because of low population density. The high population density on Sint Maarten has resulted in a dramatic loss of natural habitats.
6	Control threats to island biological diversity from invasive species	The problems of invasive species, pests and plant diseases are only recently being tackled; public awareness of these issues is still very low. There are no special training programmes in these areas. In Curacao and Aruba there are plans and proposals to establish "biosecurity units".
7	Challenges to island biodiversity from climate change and pollution	There have been no specific actions to combat climate change or to develop plans to mitigate its effects on the Dutch Antilles. Pollution has decreased somewhat. Protection of coastal waters has improved since the establishment

#	CBD objectives	Results or impacts
		of sewage treatment plants on Aruba, Curacao, Bonaire and Sint Maarten. These plants were built to protect coastal waters and because of the increase of the sewerage. Still many houses are not connected. The pollution caused by the refinery on Curacao has been reduced in the last decade. Solid waste is no longer dumped at sea, but it still happens in conservation areas because of lack of enforcement.
8	Capacity to deliver island ecosystems to deliver goods and services	The Dutch Antillean islands ecosystems are not relevant for food delivery except for fish. Practically all goods are imported and increasingly also fish from Venezuela and farms.
9	Socio-cultural diversity of local communities	There was and is limited attention towards socio-cultural diversity. A couple of NGOs with limited resources are involved in preserving the cultural heritage.
10	Fair and equitable share of benefits from genetic resources.	It is the prerogative of Island governments to decide on the use of genetic resources. So far only Saba has used it.
11	Improved financial human, scientific and technological capacity	Implementation of the CBD and capacity building for nature conservation on the islands has been a slow process with limited results except at the federal level of the Antilles. Due to constitutional changes this gain could be threatened. Most of present knowledge is concentrated in one research organisation (CARMABI) and in protected area management agencies.

Main conclusions and recommendations

- There is a need to place nature conservation, biodiversity and environmental protection higher on the political agenda.
- While much progress has been made in recent years with respect to legislation, there is a need for additional legal instruments in some areas.
- There is a need to increase budget allocations to nature conservation and environment.
- Following the constitutional change, efforts should be made to ensure a more effective and efficient application of CBD guidelines and the provisions of international treaties at the level of Aruba, Curacao and Sint Maarten as well as the BES-islands (Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba).
- The local population of the islands should be more involved and made more aware of the problems of nature conservation and biodiversity, and of possible solutions.
- There is a need for significant investments in capacity development in governmental as well as non-governmental organisations.
- There is a good knowledge base on biodiversity in the Dutch Antilles, and it should be well maintained and continuously expanded.

Appendix 4: Executive Summary, National Study of Portugal⁷

Current status

Madeira and the Azores are insular regions of Portugal with an autonomous political and administrative status under the Portuguese Constitution. Both have their own regional governments and parliaments and are responsible for the political and administrative decisions in all sectors except defence and foreign affairs.

Portugal ratified the CBD in 1993. In 2001, in accordance with its commitments to the CBD, Portugal developed its National Strategy for Nature Conservation and Biodiversity as the main policy instrument for nature conservation, promotion of the sustainable use of the natural resources and compliance with its international commitments, in particular those made under the terms of the CBD.

Institutional arrangements, policies and conservation actions

Despite its national scope, the Portuguese National Strategy does not cover the two autonomous regions of Madeira and the Azores specifically, and these two regions have not formulated their own strategy for nature conservation and biodiversity. The main linkages with the CBD's goals and targets take place at the time of reporting at national level, when Madeira and the Azores are called to cooperate with the national focal point (*Instituto de Conservação da Natureza e Biodiversidade* – National Institute for Nature Conservation and Biodiversity) and a detailed compilation of actions implemented in these regions is made and incorporated into Portugal's national report.

Despite not having established their own biodiversity strategies and action plans, Madeira and the Azores have been able to implement a significant and diverse set of actions dealing with nature conservation and biodiversity. Most of these are fully consistent with the goals of the CBD and in particular those of the Programme of Work on Island Biodiversity. Both Madeira and the Azores have also put in place a series of sectoral policies and legal arrangements, but without any specific legislation towards a comprehensive strategy for nature conservation and biodiversity.

The lack of such a strategy reduces the opportunities to integrate biodiversity and nature conservation issues into other sectoral policies and in the decision-making process. Nature conservation and biodiversity are mostly perceived and approached as limited to protected areas or particular endemic endangered species, and the value of mainstreaming biodiversity into development planning is not yet fully appreciated.

Nevertheless, as both regions have much more than 50% of their territories classified as protected areas, nature and biodiversity conservation is in effect being implemented in all main ecosystems.

Information and public participation are key elements in most of the actions and projects. At the institutional level, there is good cooperation among most of the actors working in the field of nature conservation and biodiversity in these two regions. The government departments and research laboratories have joint projects with the universities and NGOs as well as with the municipalities.

⁷ This is the Executive Summary of a report submitted by António Domíngos Abreu to IUCN and entitled *Review of the Status of Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and of Biodiversity Action Plans in the European Union Overseas Entities, Report on Portugal and its Outermost Regions*, draft version of September 2010.

Most of the financial resources used for nature conservation and biodiversity are provided by the regional authorities, and there is also a long and effective tradition in the use of co-financing from European programmes such as Life, INTERREG and PCT-Mac. INTERREG IIIB and PCT-Mac are excellent demonstrations of cooperative projects involving Madeira, the Azores and the Canary Islands (Spain) dealing with nature conservation and biodiversity at a regional (macaronesian) level, including in some cases the Cape Verde Islands in these projects. This cooperation has led to the establishment of common strategies and the use of common methods in the management of biodiversity in these islands. Exotic and invasive species, joint management and conservation of marine mammals, and a common database of endangered and endemic species are among the most visible results obtained.

Main conclusions and recommendations

While there is no formal connection between institutions and programmes in Madeira and the Azores on the one hand and the CBD on the other, it can be concluded that the goals and commitments of the CBD are well covered in these two Outermost Regions.

A local/regional strategy aligned with the CBD's Programme of Work on Island Biodiversity would however be a helpful additional tool towards a better integration of biodiversity concerns into other sectors. The two regions would also benefit from a more systematic identification of conservation priorities, as the basis for additional national, European and international support to complement and enhance the efforts made by the local authorities.

With respect to nature conservation and biodiversity, Madeira and the Azores have the opportunity to play a new and important role in relation to the European Union and international policies and instruments. When one considers their biodiversity, endemism, rarity and examples of best practices, one sees that these are the richest regions in Portugal and among the richest in Europe. They do therefore have much to offer, not only because of their contribution to global conservation, but also because they are excellent natural laboratories to understand, model and monitor biodiversity. This potential should be acknowledged by international and European programmes and institutions, consequently allowing local research teams and biodiversity managers to participate.

Considering the overall situation of biodiversity in Madeira and the Azores, this study has concluded that:

- there should be greater international and national recognition of the efforts made and successes obtained by local authorities towards the conservation of the natural assets of Madeira and the Azores;
- the national, European and international institutions should allow for a more permanent and effective participation of the local authorities in the formulation of international policies for nature conservation on islands;
- an exhaustive inventory of the capacities available and work done in these regions should be made, identifying examples of good practices as well as the main gaps and needs;
- regional governments in these two ORs should develop their own local strategies for nature conservation and biodiversity and should use them in order to assure a better integration of biodiversity into other sectoral policies, especially in land use and physical planning and in coastal zone management. Such strategies would also help to create more synergies with various international processes and instruments, especially the CBD;

- the local authorities should advocate for the inclusion of local priorities in the national biodiversity strategy and identify specific needs;
- macaronesian cooperation with the Canary Islands and Cape Verde should proceed and increase, towards a permanent common monitoring and management system for their shared biodiversity;
- this cooperation should be further extended with the rest of the European overseas entities, following the already existing positive experiences of initiatives such as the NetBiome project.

Appendix 5: Executive Summary, National Study of Spain⁸

Current status

The Canary Islands is an autonomous community of Spain, having its own government and parliament. The autonomy of the Canary Islands, as expressed in the Spanish Constitution (and the organic law 10/1982), gives it exclusive competence in a number of fields including physical planning and land management, hunting, fisheries in inner waters, aquaculture, water management, scientific research (in coordination with Spanish State), natural protected areas and coastal zone management.

Spain ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 1993 and in 1998 approved the National Strategy for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity as its main policy instrument for nature conservation. This Strategy meets Spain's commitment to produce and implement an NBSAP. Both the ratification of the Convention and the Spanish National Strategy for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity are applicable to the Canary Islands. As an autonomous region of Spain, the Canary Islands is able to approve its own regional/local strategy but no such strategy has been formulated.

Institutional arrangements, policies and conservation actions

The linkages between the Canary Islands and the CBD's goals and targets are limited mainly to the time of reporting at national level, when the Canary Islands' authorities are called upon to cooperate with the national authorities in the preparation of national reports, and a detailed compilation of actions implemented in the Canary Islands is provided and included in such reports.

Despite not having established its own strategy, the Canary Islands has been able to implement a significant and diverse set of actions dealing with nature and biodiversity conservation and management. Conservation activities are also implemented by the insular governments (i.e. the governments of each island, known as *Cabildo*) and some municipalities, since they have responsibilities for some aspects of nature conservation and biodiversity management. Some insular governments have indeed sought to formulate their own insular biodiversity strategies. Most of the work in progress is consistent with the goals of the CBD and in particular with those of the Programme of work on Island Biodiversity as well as with the main European policies and strategies for nature conservation and biodiversity.

The lack of a regional strategy in the Canary Islands is however considered as a factor responsible for the insufficient integration of biodiversity and nature conservation concerns into other sectoral policies and the general policy decision-making process. Nature conservation and biodiversity are mostly perceived and approached as specifically related to protected areas or particular endemic endangered species.

Nevertheless, as around 40% of the Canary Islands territory is under some form of protected area status, it can be argued that there is effective nature and biodiversity conservation in all the main ecosystems of the archipelago.

At the institutional level, there is good cooperation between most of the actors working in the field of nature conservation and biodiversity in this region. The

⁸ This is the Executive Summary of a report submitted by António Domíngos Abreu to IUCN and entitled *Review of the Status of Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and of Biodiversity Action Plans in the European Union Overseas Entities, Report on Spain and the Canary Islands*, draft version of September 2010.

government departments and research laboratories have joint projects with the universities and NGOs as well as with the municipalities and insular governments.

Most of the financial resources used for nature conservation and biodiversity are provided by the regional authorities and there is also a long and effective tradition in the use of co-financing from European programmes such as Life, INTERREG and PCT-Mac. National Spanish authorities are also contributing to and cooperating with regional authorities in several ways, including research programmes and protected area management, including the Biosphere Reserves.

At the level of Macaronesia, INTERREG IIIB and PCT-Mac are excellent examples of cooperative projects involving the Canary Islands, Madeira and the Azores (Portugal) dealing with nature conservation and biodiversity on a regional scale, frequently also including the Cape Verde Islands in projects. As a result of this cooperation, common strategies and methods for the management of biodiversity in these islands have been formulated and adopted. Exotic and invasive species, joint management and conservation of marine mammals, common database of endangered endemic species are among the most visible results obtained.

Main conclusions and recommendations

While there is no formal connection between institutions and programmes in the Canary Islands and the CBD, it can be concluded that the goals and commitments of the CBD are well covered in this Outermost Region.

A local strategy aligned with the CBD's Programme of Work on Island Biodiversity would however be a helpful additional tool towards a better integration of biodiversity into other sectors at local level. It would also be helpful to identify more systematically the conservation priorities, as the basis for additional national, European and international support to complement and enhance the efforts made by the local authorities.

With respect to nature and biodiversity conservation, the Canary Islands has the opportunity to play a new and important role in relation to the European Union and international policies and instruments. When one considers its biodiversity, endemism, rarity and examples of best practices, one sees that this is the richest region in Spain and among the richest in Europe. It does therefore have much to offer, not only because of its contribution to global conservation, but also because it is an excellent natural laboratory to understand, model and monitor biodiversity. These roles should be acknowledged by international programmes and institutions, consequently allowing local research teams and biodiversity managers to participate.

Considering the overall situation of biodiversity in the Canary Islands, this study has concluded that:

- there should be greater international and national recognition of the efforts made and successes obtained by local authorities towards the conservation of the natural assets of this OR;
- the national, European and international institutions should allow for a more permanent and effective participation of the local authorities in the formulation of international policies for nature conservation on islands;
- an exhaustive inventory of the capacities and work done in this Region should be made, identifying examples of good practices as well as the main gaps and needs;
- the regional government in the Canary Islands should develop its own local strategies for nature conservation and biodiversity and should use it in order

to assure a better integration of biodiversity into other sectoral policies, especially in land use and physical planning and in coastal zone management;

- the local authorities should advocate the need to better reflect local priorities in the national biodiversity strategy and action plan and identify specific needs;
- macaronesian cooperation with the Portuguese ORs and Cape Verde should proceed and increase, towards a permanent monitoring and management system for the area's common and shared biodiversity;
- this cooperation should be further extended with the rest of the European overseas entities, following the already existing positive experiences of initiatives such as the NetBiome project.

Appendix 6: Executive Summary, National Study of the UK⁹

Current status

The United Kingdom's Overseas Territories (UKOT) are 14 small island territories, some uninhabited, located in the Caribbean Sea, Indian Ocean, Pacific and South Atlantic. Low in population size, they range from 51 (Pitcairn) to 110,000 (British Virgin Islands) inhabitants. As a result of their isolation, these islands have high levels of endemic biodiversity, provide key habitat for migratory species such as sea birds and host rich coral and marine life, but are disproportionately vulnerable to the impacts of climate change in comparison to their size and population as well as impacts of alien invasive species. The UKOTs collectively contain 240 globally threatened species, 74 of which are critically endangered.

The UK signed the Convention on Biological Diversity (1992) on behalf of the Kingdom, including its Overseas Territories, but only three of the UKOTs are included, at the request of their governments, in the UK's ratification of the CBD (1994). These are the British Virgin Islands (BVI), Cayman Islands and St. Helena and its territories of Ascension and Tristan da Cunha. It is unclear why uninhabited Overseas Territories (OTs) have not been included in the UK's ratification.

OTs not included in the ratification of UK's CBD are not legally covered by the Convention. UK reports to the CBD Secretariat provide limited information on the OTs and in-consistent on which OTs are included in the reports. In practice, OTs covered and not covered by the CBD are treated the same in terms of eligibility for UK funding and conservation support.

Background

Until 2001, biodiversity conservation in each of the OTs was viewed by the UK government as primarily the responsibility of the local OT government. At the time of drafting the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) in 1994, OT biodiversity resources were *treated* as non-British resources and given limited attention in the 1994 UK BAP and 1997 UK BAP update.

However, the UK government acknowledged greater commitment to UKOT biodiversity conservation in 2001 with the signing of Environment Charters between the UK government and each of the OT governments. This was accompanied by funding support through the current Overseas Territories Environment Programme funded jointly by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office was responsible for overseeing the Charters' implementation because of its mandate to coordinate all UK Government policy on the OTs. However it was hampered in this role because of its lack of a formal mandate for biodiversity and environmental issues.

Institutional arrangements, policies and conservation actions

Between 2007 and 2009 changes were made to the UK institutional arrangements for biodiversity conservation and support to the OTs. This included the establishment of a Cross-Departmental Overseas Territory Biodiversity Partnership, chaired by the UK Department for Environment and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). The Foreign and

⁹ This is the Executive Summary of a report submitted by Gillian Cooper to IUCN and entitled *Review of the Status of Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and of Biodiversity Action Plans in the European Union Overseas Entities, Report on the United Kingdom and its Overseas Territories*, draft version of September 2010.

Commonwealth Office, the Department for International Development, the UK Overseas Territories Association and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), which acts as the Secretariat, are all part of the Partnership. In 2009, a United Kingdom Overseas Territory Biodiversity Strategy was developed which gives recognition to the globally significant biodiversity in the UKOTs and underscores the UK government commitment to support Territory governments to meet international obligations. The strategy is backed up by the JNCC's 2008-2011 Programme Plan for JNCC's Nature Conservation in the OTs.

There is a vast difference in the size and capacity of the environment and conservation departments in the OTs. They range from a relatively large and well resourced department in the Cayman Islands with 37 staff to that of Tristan with one staff member and sporadic volunteer support.

Despite the constraints, considerable progress has been made by OT governments in analysing how policies and existing institutional arrangements can be better integrated for more holistic approaches to sustainable development, and in developing strategies and action plans best suited to their capacity. The Cayman Islands and Tristan have both developed Biodiversity Action Plans (BAP). The BVI, St. Helena and Ascension all have a current plan or strategy that provides a guide to biodiversity conservation needs on the territories. In the development of each of these documents, a consultative and participatory approach has been employed.

In the territories where BAPs have been developed, the process appears to have been an important 'growth' opportunity within the conservation departments. Skills and knowledge have been improved in marshalling the required information for the BAP - inventories of island species and habitats as well as in the development and monitoring of plans.

On the ground, UKOTs have made significant and steady progress in designating protected areas, in endemic species and habitat conservation, and in the control of invasive species. In many cases this has been achieved by small and resource poor NGOs and conservation departments. However, progress is lacking in holistic and ecosystem approaches to conservation such as watershed management and building climate change resilience. Comprehensive management and a strategic approach to maintaining representative ecosystems need greater consideration. In general, issues affecting biodiversity conservation outside protected areas, such as land-use control and development, have been far more challenging.

Main conclusions

The peculiar sovereignty status of the UKOTs makes the mechanisms through MEAs as well as EU and regional policies complex and unclear. In most cases UKOTs are excluded from the funding mechanisms for MEAs afforded to sovereign states. At the level of the EU, OTs are given disproportionately low attention to the value of their biodiversity. OTs have traditionally occupied a development aid relationship. EU Member States should seek to move beyond this classic relationship and develop a more equitable relationship with regard to biodiversity conservation policy and practice.

The recently established UK institutional arrangements and strategy to address biodiversity conservation in the OTs have helped to solidify roles and responsibilities. However, at present there seems to be, in general, a one-way, linear communication flow from the UK to the UKOTs. It is as yet unclear how achievements and lessons learned from biodiversity work in the UKOTs are disseminated to the wider UK biodiversity 'community'. At present UKOT biodiversity work appears 'sectoralised'

and lacking integration within the public sector bodies and other institutions dealing with biodiversity throughout the UK.

In the UKOTs, governments have made an effort to develop policies and institutional arrangements better suited to delivering sustainable development and meeting conservation goals. However the implementation mechanisms and legal tools to put plans into practice appear to have fallen short.

Firstly, management functions for biodiversity related issues are spread across a number of departments, making coordination complex. Secondly, the overall legislative framework is outdated and weak implementation and enforcement has caused biodiversity loss. In many cases, comprehensive new legislation has been drafted but not yet enacted years later. Thirdly, the political nature of land use and development control brings conservation and environmental departments and NGOs into conflict with more powerful development interests. The ability of environment agencies tasked with the implementation of CBD commitments to influence development planning and land use is often limited, even in cases where there is an environmental impact assessment (EIA) and established planning process.

Finally, shortage of funding remains a major constraint for meeting biodiversity targets. The earmarked £1.5 million from DEFRA's Darwin Initiative for OT conservation work has been welcomed by conservation practitioners. However, in addition to the £1 million from the Overseas Territories Environment Programme, it is minor in comparison to the £450 million spent on biodiversity conservation in the UK. For aid dependent OTs, conservation work is totally dependent on grants through these two funds. Programmatic funding rather than one-off conservation projects would be preferred in many cases to sustain conservation gains. This arrangement is not uncommon for conservation activities in metropolitan UK where the global significance of biodiversity is poor in comparison to the global biodiversity value residing in UKOTs.