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Contents Page

Foreword	3
Aim and Purpose	3
Method	3
Executive Summary	4
Crime Enablers and Barriers	4
Priority Areas ~ Key Findings and Recommendations	5
 Assessment of 2009/11 Wildlife Crime Priorities	
Badger Persecution	8
Bat Persecution	11
CITES Issues	13
Freshwater Pearl Mussels	17
Poaching	19
Raptor Persecution	25
 Intelligence Requirements ~ Key Findings and Recommendations	
Orchids	32
Caviar	33
Ramin	33
European Eels	33
Finch Trapping	33
Wild Birds' Eggs	34
 Non Priority Areas	34
 Appendices	
One ~ PESTELO Issues	37
Two ~ Geographical Breakdown of ACPO Regions	45
Three ~All Reported Incidents	46
Four ~ All 'Other' Incidents	47
Five ~ Overview of new UK Wildlife Crime Priorities and Intelligence Requirements	48

Foreword

This assessment has been produced by the UK National Wildlife Crime Unit (NWCU) to inform the UK *Strategic* Tasking and Coordinating (UK TCG) meeting from which decisions on the forthcoming priorities and intelligence requirements will be made. The response to the crime threats needs to be evidence based and seeks to be centred on prevention, enforcement and intelligence gathering to wholly understand each issue, with clear focus on the act of criminality and its impact upon wildlife.

Wildlife crime does not feature in the National Community Safety Plan¹ (NCSP). The UK does however have a number of European and international obligations relating to wildlife crime requiring enforcement activity.

The UK has a number of dedicated resources with considerable expertise who are committing to tackling wildlife crime. Due to the nature of wildlife crime, a number of law enforcement agencies have responsibility for its enforcement.

Aim and Purpose

This Strategic Assessment (SA) is a National Intelligence Model (NIM) product aimed at describing the threats faced by the UK during the last two years since the last Strategic Assessment was produced. It seeks to describe and explore in greater detail the significant threats and harm caused by wildlife crime.

It will review all six priority areas already in existence to understand whether the threat is still present, where this applies to and ultimately to recommend if each need to continue to be a priority area of business. The plan owners for almost all priority areas² have provided an update which should outline their effectiveness and where challenges still lie. The four intelligence requirement (IR) sections will be examined to assess what has been learnt from allocating each with this status and if it is deemed necessary for them to remain as an IR.

Following the UK Strategic TCG meeting, the future priorities and intelligence requirements are decided. Each will be reviewed within UK Tactical Assessments (currently produced three times a year) and a formal evaluation will then take place within the next Strategic Assessment, due February 2013.

Method

The following data sources were used to measure the volume of wildlife crime;

- Police reported incidents from most UK forces³
- Incident data gratefully received from The Badger Trust, Scottish Badgers, RSPB, Bat Conservation Trust, League Against Cruel Sports, SSPCA and RSPCA⁴

In order to fully understand the context of these incidents the following will be used;

- Consultation with UK TCG, wildlife crime officers and wider partner agencies
- Summaries of academic work
- Open source information

The date parameters will capture any of the above that occurred or was produced between 1st September 2008 and 31st August 2010⁵.

¹ 2008/11

² Poaching plan owner update for England & Wales was not received

³ Greater Manchester Police and Hampshire do not currently send any incident returns to the NWCU

⁴ Any duplicates of police reported data will be removed

⁵ See appendix three for a full breakdown of all incidents

Executive Summary

New Priorities and Intelligence Requirements were identified and agreed upon at the UK TCG meeting⁶ (17th February 2011). It had previously been agreed in 2009 that the priorities would be finalised after a ‘scoring’ process where matrix criteria would be limited to two - volume (number of incidents (based upon NWCU analysis)) and the feature of conservation interest (FOCI) (previously agreed at Wildlife Law Enforcement Working Group (WLEWG) meeting) which would be *multiplied* together. NWCU produced this matrix from the new volume of strategic data. However, the exercise has simply reinforced that the unit receives the most data on the priority areas and does not appear to offer any assistance to the decision making process for the setting of future priorities.

Therefore, the WLEWG recommendations were adopted in full and the current *volume* priorities were also continued. The Priorities and Intelligence Requirements for 2011-2013 are therefore⁷:

Priorities

- ~ Badger Persecution
- ~ Bat Persecution
- ~ CITES (with a focus on Ivory, Tortoises and Traditional Medicines⁸)
- ~ Freshwater pearl mussels
- ~ Poaching (with a focus on deer poaching/coursing; fish poaching and hare coursing)
- ~ Raptor persecution (with a focus on Hen Harrier, Goshawk, Golden eagle, White-Tailed Eagle, Red Kite and adding *Peregrine*)

Intelligence requirements:

- ~ CITES Annex A & B Orchids
- ~ CITES Timber (with a focus on Ramin)
- ~ Finch Trapping
- ~ Illegal taking of wild bird eggs
- ~ Illegal trade in Raptors
- ~ Illegal trade in Parrots
- ~ Introduction of non-native species

It was also recommended and agreed that the trade in European Eel was removed as an intelligence requirement and for this issue to be continued to be addressed in an intelligence led and proactive manner by the CITES Management Authority (Animal Health (AH)), UKBA and the Environment Agency. AH and UKBA would pool intelligence on both illegal trade and illegal fishing through the Environment Agency.

Crime Enablers and Barriers

Where applicable some sections contain information about ‘Crime Enablers’ or ‘Barriers to Enforcement’. These are the identification of strategic, overarching areas of concern that are likely to be happening at a UK wide level and are ultimately allowing criminality to continue or are hindering the effective investigation or prosecution of offences.

Data Limitations

Only two years of reliable incident data is available at the NWCU to analyse at a UK level. Therefore the reporting of trends or seasonality is not possible in this SA. Year one and two have

⁶ See appendix five for summary

⁷ Presented in alphabetical order, *not* order of importance

⁸ Including rhino horn

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been used as a comparison however any changes in figures between those two periods should be viewed with caution and are not necessarily indicative of longer term movements of incidents.

It should be borne in mind that throughout this assessment it is *incidents* that are being reported, *not* crimes. Incidents are not subjected to the same standardised counting rules as recorded crime is. The NWCUC has produced internal guidelines that ensure incidents meet a certain standard and that categorisation is consistent, however sometimes the limited amount of data makes it difficult to establish whether criminality has occurred or how it occurred.

The Internet

The full extent of trading of CITES species on the Internet both nationally and globally is currently unknown but estimated to be a substantial risk. It is suggested with its world wide global reach that online auction houses are becoming an increasing threat. Partners within PAW believe there to be a significant illegal trade in endangered species on the Internet and some evidence of this was found within IFAW report; 'Killing with Keystrokes' however as yet the UK has not had the capacity to assess this.

Priority Areas ~ Key Findings

1.0 Badger Persecution

- Badger persecution currently accounts for almost one tenth of all reported incidents
- The damage, disturbance and interference of setts accounts for 38% of all incidents and this offence type has become more prevalent during the last twelve months which may coincide with the political discourse surrounding the proposed badger cull and incidents of this manner are most common in the South West ACPO region⁹
- Both data gathered by the NWCUC and the RSPCA indicate an overall decrease in badger fighting (baiting and digging)

2.0 Bat Persecution

- The development of land and property on a commercial level is the most significant problem affecting the population of bats
- Awareness raising of legislation to the construction sector and local authorities may aid the prevention of offences, penalties are not dissuasive and may fail to act as a deterrent

3.0 CITES Priorities

3.1.0 CITES Ivory

- Little is currently known about trading of ivory on a great scale within the UK

3.2.0 CITES ~ Tortoises

- The profit margins for the illegal trade are high
- Reported incidents to the police are low, though the actual amount of illegal internal trading occurring is perceived to be much greater
- Illegal trading facilitated by use of the internet could pose a real threat and little is currently known about the full extent of this
- The UK is the largest legal importer of Hermann's tortoises and 50% of police reported incidents over the last two years refer to this species type (where the species is known)
- The removal of EU internal borders makes the monitoring of both legal and illegal trade problematic

⁹ See appendix two for full breakdown of ACPO regions in England and Wales

3.3.0 CITES Traditional Medicine

- There appears to be a market for traditional medicines (TM) across the UK, though this is not apparent in police reported data
- The most common listed ingredient in TM's is *Saussurea costus*, which has been found in six of the twenty most popular products sold within the UK
- The global demand for rhino horn for its medicinal value led to its prioritisation under the CITES traditional medicine umbrella in 2010
- A global increase in demand for seahorses has led to the UK market being targeted and there is a concern that their importation may contravene CITES

4.0 Freshwater Pearl Mussels

- Criminality relating to FWPM shows no signs of decreasing during the strategic period
- Predominantly an issue within Scotland and therefore should remain a priority there
- The two aspects of FWPM criminality are *the taking of* which is being managed well through the Tasking and Coordinating Process in Scotland and *disturbance* which is being addressed by FWPM Priority Delivery Group under the guise of Operation Caesar

5.1.0 Poaching

- Although almost seven out of every ten reports are categorised as suspicious (meaning poaching was not seen but suspected), it does indicate that the public are concerned enough to report the activity to police. Additionally, these types of incidents coincide with damage caused to land and anti social behaviour being experienced by those residing in rural communities
- Geographical variations are evident, with the North East ACPO region causing the most concern, (primarily Humberside) and this is consistent with hotspots for hare coursing and deer poaching. It is likely that any operational activity targeting these two crime types in these areas will impact upon other forms of poaching and rural crime
- The effective combating of illegal hare coursing should be seen as a mechanism that will allow inroads to be made into wider rural crime issues
- The management of poaching and hare coursing within some regions is already underway to some extent. The North Region strategy meeting started out from a meeting of Yorkshire Forces Wildlife Crime Officers to discuss the issues that they had locally, cross border crime, cross border initiatives and cooperation, the exchange of intelligence, follow up enquiries and policies to deal with poaching and rural crime initiatives
- The key to ensuring resources are allocated to wildlife crime in force areas may be in emphasising its association with rural crime and by ensuring its rationale is centred on citizen focus
- The success of the SWTCG and the north of England rural crime meetings show the value of regional collaboration. Unless the introduction of regional PEG meetings takes place across the rest of England¹⁰ - coordinated enforcement, intelligence sharing, regional priority focus and preventative action will remain disjointed and have lesser impact

Crime Enablers / Barriers

- Neighbourhood Management have a different set of priorities that do not always include hare coursing or poaching and it is believed that they are under more pressure to tackle more 'urban' problems such as criminal damage or anti social behaviour
- The one year partnership funding¹¹ of a dedicated Poaching Project Officer in England and Wales ceased in October 2010. The post was an advisory role which provided guidance to law enforcement, Statutory Nature Conservation Organisations (SNCO) and those with a vested interest in regards to the rural environment. Considerable inroads were made in the relation to

¹⁰ Wales ACPO region has a proven history of successful collaboration

¹¹ Jointly funded by BASC, Environment Agency and The Deer Initiative

investigative strategies and the coordination of rural initiatives, following significant interest from the media leading to improved public awareness.

5.2.0 Deer Poaching ~ Key Findings

- Deer poaching currently accounts for 8% of wildlife crime and is increasing
- Almost one third of deer poaching is reported in Scotland (32% / 245)
- The shooting of deer is lessening whilst the coursing of deer with dogs increasing
- Deer populations across the UK are moving into urban areas, increasing deer and human interactions and may account for the rise in activity

5.3.0 Fish Poaching ~ Key Findings

- Fish poaching is increasing but this only applies to certain ACPO and ACPOS regions
- Scotland reports over 34% of all poaching incidents and the amount is rising
- The demand for salmon within and from outside the UK is high
- Wide nets are being used to take fish and is indicative of poaching on a commercial scale

5.4.0 Hare Coursing ~ Key Findings

- Hare coursing currently accounts for almost one fifth of all reported wildlife crime
- This is predominantly affecting just four ACPO and ACPOS regions; Eastern, South East, North East and Scotland. The increase of activity by 130% during the last two years occurred primarily in these regions
- Regional meetings are already underway in the North of England and Scotland

6.0 Raptor Persecution

- Six out of ten incidents of raptor persecution refer to the deliberate killing and injuring of raptors.
- Over one quarter of these incidents occur in Scotland, though there has been a decrease over the last twelve months
- Disturbance and destruction of nests is an issue for raptors, though establishing whether this type of activity is intentional is problematic
- Data held by Raptor Study Groups should be used to illustrate the impact of criminality upon local populations and to strengthen impact statements at court

7.0 Non Priority Areas ~ Environmental Damage, Destruction and Disturbance

- The habitats of birds are at the greatest threat, over half of all incidents refer to the disturbance or destruction of their nests, with developmental work being the primary cause
- Furthermore, damage to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) accounts for almost one fifth of reports. Qualifying features for such areas may be due to the protected birds that inhabit those sites
- Anti social behaviour such as off roading, camping, burning and fly tipping are increasing and are damaging SSSI's. It is assessed the most adequate response should be provided at a local / force level where the need is dictated

Assessment of 2009/11 Priorities

1.0 Badger Persecution ~ Key Findings

- Badger persecution currently accounts for almost one tenth of all reported incidents
- The damage, disturbance and interference of setts accounts for 38% of all incidents and this offence type has become more prevalent during the last twelve months which may coincide with the political discourse surrounding the proposed badger cull and incidents of this manner are most common in the South West ACPO region
- Both data gathered by the NWCUC and the RSPCA indicate an overall decrease in badger fighting (baiting and digging)

1.1 During the strategic period badger persecution accounted for 9% (853) of all reported incidents. The number of reported incidents of badger persecution has reduced during year two in comparison to year one, despite the addition of SSPCA and RSPCA data during year two¹². At this time however, it is difficult to establish whether this reduction in the short term is indicative of an overall decline in criminality or due to another contributing factor.

1.2 Urban sprawl and intensive agriculture may be having an effect on the badger population. The disturbance of setts accounted for the greatest number of incidents (39% / 337) and three main issues appear to be contributing to this;

- Overwhelmingly setts appeared to have been blocked, based on this information alone it is difficult to establish whether this activity is unintentional or deliberate
- The clearing of land for development purposes
- The felling of trees and forestry operations are reported to be disturbing setts, there is a concern that the required licences are not being applied for

1.3 The previous Strategic Assessment found that badger baiting was the most common type of persecution occurring, accounting for 42% of incidents. During the most recent strategic period badger fighting (baiting and digging) has decreased to 26% (225). These findings are also consistent with data from the RSPCA which shows a reported decrease in digging and baiting during 2004-2008 and an increase in sett interference during the same period.

Geographical

1.4 Scotland reported the greatest incidence of badger persecution during the strategic period; accounting for 14% (117) overall. The problem within Scotland may be linked to land management issues, as almost half of reported incidents related to sett disturbance (45% / 53) and the illegal use of traps and snares accounted for 18% (21) of incidents.

1.5 Almost all ACPO and ACPOS regions had experienced a decrease in the number of incidents reported during year two compared to year one, except the ACPO regions of the South East and South West.

1.6 Badger fighting has also been an issue in the North West ACPO region; reporting the second greatest number of this specific offence type after PSNI (though this has decreased within the last twelve months). The NWCUC does not currently receive incident data from Greater Manchester Police (GMP) or Lancashire Police¹³ therefore the prevalence rate could be higher within this region particularly given the geographical size of GMP and Lancashire combined.

¹² Year one received 438 incidents, this decreased to 415 during year two

¹³ 2010 data submitted but was too late for inclusion within SA

Offender Type

1.7 Nominals involved in badger fighting are exclusively male, likely to work in groups and have links to other criminality, the possession of drugs, weapons and firearms are typical. Previous convictions for assault and violence are common and this is supported by academic research which argues that the same personality traits are linked to crime against humans and nonhumans¹⁴.

Plan Owner Update

Overall Objective

Improve and increase the recording of incidents, crimes and intelligence for badger persecution. Improve the investigation process and increase awareness of badger persecution across the UK.

How has the priority delivery group (as a whole) progressed over the last two years?

Much progress has been made over the last two years although this has been slower than anticipated. Plan ownership changed midway through the period with the current plan owner taking on the responsibility at the end of 2009. Although some members of the group have badger specific roles in their relative organisations there are others who undertake many other rolls and responsibilities outside of the badger remit. This has an obvious impact with many group members having to find time in busy schedules.

There was previously some confusion within the group as to where Operation “Meles” fitted into the overall badger Plan priorities, “Meles” originally being the intelligence led enforcement element of the overall plan. More recently “Meles” has changed into a more educational and prevention aspect of the plan. It is hoped that a public launch of Operation “Meles” can be arranged soon.

Communication within the group and out to partner agencies remains an area where improvement is needed, with a working communications strategy still to be fully developed. Communications with the NWCUC has improved greatly over the two years, with increased reporting of incidents now taking place. Communications in relation to live and actionable incidents is seen by some NGO group members as being an area for improvement. It is appreciated that Police have operational priorities that may prevent them attending badger related incidents, we therefore need to develop better communications and liaison between Police Control rooms and NGO’s who may be able to attend and investigate incidents.

The group has met twice during 2010. Due to the spread of group members across the UK this has been recognised as a difficulty in arranging frequent meetings. The possibility of video conferencing is currently being explored. Overall membership of the group has increased during 2010 and we are slowly achieving a wider geographical spread of members. In the past we have lacked representation from the South of England and Wales.

How has the group progressed its overall objective(s)?

The recent production of a “Meles” poster, together with a leaflet that is currently being worked on, demonstrates progress in increasing the awareness of badger persecution in the law enforcement community and beyond. With regard to increasing recording of incidents the plan is on target and the inclusion of RSPCA data has assisted in the overall provision of national statistics. There is still some way to go in obtaining timely and accurate figures from volunteers from various badger organisations and this remains a priority for the prevention lead. Some issues exist, particularly in Scotland, regarding the proper investigation of incidents within appropriate timescales. These problems are purely down to available resources and the likelihood is that this situation could worsen during the current economic climate.

Is the Action Plan being progressed? If not, why not? Do the actions meet the overall objective(s)?

The action plan is being progressed, albeit more slowly than hoped for. Firm timescales and deadlines have not previously been laid down or adhered to, this being an area which the plan owner and group need to address. Training is an area where the plan is advancing well. Scottish Badgers now offer training courses for enforcers at two levels. RSPCA has recently appointed nineteen Special Investigation Officers. These officers are RSPCA Inspectors who have successfully completed two weeks additional intensive training. This training is designed to enable them to undertake complex investigations, in particular badger persecution cases. Work is ongoing in the education and awareness aspects of the action plan and we are looking to progress educational inputs for schools to increase awareness and provide advice to construction companies on the law surrounding sett interference and destruction.

¹⁴ Agnew, R. (1998) The causes of animal abuse: a social-psychological analysis.

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Do you foresee any future issues (in the next 5 years) that will pose a threat to the priority group continuing or succeeding in meeting its objective(s)?

The main issues identified are in relation to funding. The most obvious concern being Police funding and the continuing support for Police Wildlife Crime Officers. NGO's are also feeling the financial pressures with the potential for cuts being made in front line staff. One NGO position is dependant on both Government grants and charitable contributions, possibly requiring new areas of funding to be identified and sought.

The threat outlined under emerging issues in the strategic assessment relating to the proposed badger cull in England and Wales is recognised as a very real one. If the culls take place then there is a very real danger of illegal badger persecution being carried out under the pretext of culling activity. A further potential threat in relation to illegal persecution could arise if Government were to repeal the Hunting Act 2004. If this were the case then past experience has shown that terriermen deliberately entering dogs into badger setts seek to exploit a defence that they were hunting and digging for foxes. Although this not an acceptable defence, this approach has often led to inexperienced investigators seeing this as a reasonable excuse offered by badger persecutors who are detected entering dogs and/or digging into badger setts. The badger priority delivery group recognises and would agree with the recently revived Naturewatch campaign, that the non-recordable offence status of wildlife related crime presents an ongoing threat to the efficient investigation and recording of badger related crime¹⁵.

¹⁵ This does not apply to Scotland

2.0 Bat Persecution ~ Key Findings

- The development of land and property on a commercial level is the most significant problem affecting the population of bats
- Awareness raising of legislation to the construction sector and local authorities may aid the prevention of offences, penalties are not dissuasive and may fail to act as a deterrent

2.1 Bat Persecution is not a great volume contributor to wildlife crime in the UK, currently only accounting for 3% (294¹⁶) of all reported incidents. Though this is a percentage decrease against the last strategic period when it accounted for 4% of incidents, the actual number of reports received during the strategic period has increased¹⁷ and is now inclusive of data from the Bat Conservation Trust; which currently accounts for 30% (88) of the overall incident count¹⁸. Subsequently, only seven out of ten incidents of criminality reported to the NWCWU originate from a police force and this is a situation unique only to bat persecution. Additionally, the Bat Conservation Trust recently published Batcrime 2009 which found the highest number of incidents was reported during 2009, averaging 10.5 per month compared to 5.2 per month in 2007.

2.2 The development of land and property is the greatest concern to bat persecution and as such is the main focus of prevention work. Work conducted to develop property both commercially (49% / 145) and to dwellings (6% / 18) account for over half of all reported incidents (55% / 163). Furthermore Bat Crime 2009 found that development, maintenance, roofing and land clearance accounted for 85% of reports and this was found to be a significantly higher proportion compared to figures compiled in 2003 and 2007.

2.3 In around 6% (10) of incidents held at the NCWU where the causation is development, it is suspected there were issues with the adherence of conditions on the licence.

2.4 The felling of trees (for a variety of reasons) is the second greatest type of reported incident, accounting for 16% (47) and in one in five of these cases the complainant suspected the work was being carried out on behalf of the local authority.

2.5 Assessing the geographical distribution of crime does not appear appropriate for bat persecution. Instead, it is likely that there is a correlation between areas where awareness of bat persecution is greater and where there are high numbers of incidents being reported. This is perhaps exemplified well within the Wales ACPO region where during the strategic period 27% (79) of incidents were reported as occurring here, the greatest amount of all regions¹⁹. An increase of reported incidents in these areas may also be associated to the density of bat populations.

2.6 Almost one in ten incidents concerns the reported demolition of buildings suspected to contain roosts (9% / 27). The demolition or destruction of roosts ultimately means the loss of any essential evidence, in the absence of other evidence such as a survey to prove the presence of bats the investigation is unlikely to succeed.

2.7 Where the species type is known²⁰, the common pipistrelle²¹ (32% / 29) and the brown long eared (31% / 28) bats were the most affected. The brown long eared has been outlined as one of seven species listed for their priority concern²², due to their particular sensitivity to changes in building and land use.

¹⁶ Includes reported BCT incident data that has not been reporting by the originating police force

¹⁷ Not including BCT data, year one received 86 reports, year two 120

¹⁸ For bats only

¹⁹ Followed next by the SW region reporting (13% / 79)

²⁰ In 75% (220) of incidents this information is not provided

²¹ Currently indicating a favourable status as shown in Overall Conservation Status of UK Bat Species, 2007; JNCC

²² UK Biodiversity Action Plan

Other species featuring on this list such as lesser horseshoe (21% / 19) and greater horseshoe (6% / 7) have been subjected to criminality but to a lesser extent. Overwhelmingly though, the species type is not known therefore determining the impact of known criminality upon particular bat species is not possible at this time.

Plan Owner Update

Overall objective

To reduce bat crime by, working with key stakeholders to raise awareness of responsibilities and criminal offences against bats, by promoting a preventative enforcement approach and by improving the submission of intelligence and standards of investigation relating to bats across the UK.

How has the priority delivery group (as a whole) progressed over the last two years?

Bat crime was one of first wildlife crimes to be identified as a UK wildlife crime priority but despite this a priority delivery group has only been put in place during 2010. The reasons for this stem primarily from the lack at UK level of a plan owner and the inability to continue funding for a “Bat crime” project officer after 2007. In 2010 the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) appointed an investigations officer who had knowledge of the manner in which the priority could or should be taken forward. As a consequence in recent months the bat crime priority delivery group have made substantial progress. A plan owner has been identified and representatives of CCW, NE and SNH attend meetings along with the Police and NWCU. At present Northern Ireland are not represented on the group but efforts are being made to address that situation. There is ample evidence to demonstrate that a majority of bat crimes (over 80%) are related to development of one form or another. As such consideration is being given as to how industry might be represented on the group.

How has the group progressed its overall objective(s)?

In recent months much work has been done in progressing this objective. Recent research undertaken by BCT has been published in the form of Bat Crime 2009. This reinforces previous findings that most bat crimes are related to development in one form or another strengthening the identified need to identify and work with key stakeholders.

Is the Action Plan being progressed? If not, why not? Do the actions meet the overall objective(s)?

An action plan has been produced and actions are now being worked on and in some cases have already been delivered (e.g. Bat Crime 2009 and production of standard operating procedures for both England and Wales as well as for Scotland). Our actions seek to address all the individual components of the objective. Whenever BCT or other members of the group become aware of an allegation of bat crime there is in every case personal contact with the investigating officer aimed at promoting a partnership approach to the investigation with particular regard to the opportunities for preventative action.

Do you foresee any future issues (in the next 5 years) that will pose a threat to the priority group continuing or succeeding in meeting its objective(s)?

Statutory authorities are of course under financial pressure and as such the level of resource being put into the group by all involved may not be sustainable over an extended period of time. BCT are a relatively small charity and whilst our commitment to this wildlife crime priority will remain the level of resource that can be committed cannot be guaranteed even though the post of investigations officer is considered to be a key priority. The plan owner agreed to take on the role in part because no other individuals or organisations felt able to take the priority forward at UK level. BCT remain of the view that the lead might be better taken by one of the statutory agencies, who cannot be said to be promoting an inappropriate or unbiased approach to the issue. However, until an alternative plan owner can be identified, is content to remain as the plan owner.

3.0 CITES Issues

(With three current CITES priorities of Ivory, Tortoises and Traditional Medicines²³)

3.1.0 CITES Ivory ~ Key Findings

- Little is currently known about trading of ivory on a great scale within the UK

3.1.1 Incidents concerning ivory have remained relatively low over the last two years, with four in total being reported. Two reports related to the unlawful sale of jewellery made from elephant ivory in shops in the London region, the two remaining related to sperm whale teeth in the Scotland region.

3.2.0 CITES ~ Tortoises ~ Key Findings

- The profit margins for the illegal trade are high
- Reported incidents to the police are low, though the actual amount of illegal trading occurring is perceived to be much greater
- Illegal trading facilitated by the internet could pose a real threat and little is currently known about the full extent of this
- The UK is the largest legal importer of hermann's tortoises and 50% of police reported incidents over the last two years refer to this species type (where the species is known)
- The removal of EU internal borders makes the monitoring of both legal and illegal trade problematic

3.2.1 While there is a healthy legal trade of tortoises within the UK, it is believed there is a strong illegal trade. UK traders can make vast profits from the illegal sale of tortoises to the pet trade; the on-going demand in the UK for pet tortoises is significantly high enough to make illegal trade a high-reward, low-risk activity for traders. It is apparent that the majority of the illegal trade is embedded within the legal trade, therefore making it extremely difficult to detect or to enforce. In 2007 TRAFFIC estimated that a horsfield tortoise could be purchased from Uzbekistan for 15 pence and could finish being sold by a UK retailer for £150, although slightly outdated this does give some indication of the profit margin. The impact that the illegal tortoise trade has on the populations of endangered wild tortoises, although difficult to measure, is believed to be extremely high.

3.2.2 During the strategic period reviewed, there were 24 reported incidents (with most referring to tortoises being traded without an article 10) and accounts for around 1% of all reported incidents, furthermore the number of incidents that are being reported has decreased from year one (15) by six during year two (9).

3.2.3 All tortoises are listed on CITES however the removal of internal borders of the European Union has meant it is difficult to monitor both the legal and illegal trade. This issue then places more need for the law to be enforced at the point of sale.

3.2.4 Where the species type is known, the hermann's (50% / 12) and spur thighed (20% / 5) tortoise were the most commonly traded according to police reported data during the strategic period. It is believed that hermann's tortoises can be more easily captive bred than the spur thighed.

²³ Including Rhino Horn

3.3.0 CITES Traditional Medicine ~ Key Findings

- There appears to be a market for traditional medicines (TM) across the UK, though this is not apparent in police reported data
- The most common CITES listed ingredient in TM is *Saussurea costus*, which has been found in six of the twenty most popular products sold within the UK
- The global demand for rhino horn for its medicinal value led to its prioritisation under the CITES traditional medicine umbrella in 2010
- The China Association of Chinese Medicines report price increases of 700% in 2010 which could potentially entice people to become involved in trading in the current economic crisis. Conversely, it may also result in TCM retailers closing down as products become too expensive
- A global increase in demand for seahorses has led to the UK market being targeted and there is a concern that their importation may contravene CITES

3.3.1 There is evidence to suggest that a market for traditional medicines exists within the UK. Police data reports fifteen incidents in connection with the display or sale of products contain CITES listed specimens. The London region disproportionately reports the greatest number of incidents (67% / 10); though this could be due to two pivotal factors. The largest Chinese population across the UK reside within the Metropolitan Police force area may mean demand in this area will be higher, but it may also be true to say that Metropolitan wildlife crime officers are sufficiently equipped to seek out this type of offence and investigate them as necessary as a consequence of Operation Charm.

3.3.2 There are major Chinese contingents in almost all cities across the UK outside of London, moreover the Chinese community is the second greatest fastest growing non-European ethnic group in the UK. Based upon this it would be inaccurate to assume that the problem is predominantly occurring in this one region.

3.3.3 The trading or seizure of *Saussurea costus* (30% / 74) was most commonly reported. *Saussurea costus* is listed on Annex A however is one of 50 fundamental herbs used in traditional medicines and its root was provided as appearing in six of the top twenty products available in the UK²⁴.

New Priority ~ Rhino Horn

3.3.4 A report published by TRAFFIC in July 2009 showed an increase in rhino poaching since 2000 and it was assessed this was largely due to the increased demand in the medicinal value of rhino horn in certain countries. An estimated three rhinos were illegally killed each month across the whole of Africa from 2000-2005, out of a population of around 18,000. In contrast, 12 rhinoceroses are now being poached each month in South Africa and Zimbabwe alone. A briefing by WWF, IUCN and TRAFFIC states “Illegal rhino horn trade to destinations in Asia is driving the killing, with growing evidence of involvement of Vietnamese, Chinese and Thai nationals in the illegal procurement and transport of rhino horn out of Africa”. The global demand subsequently led to a high increase in its monetary value, where in some parts of Asia, rhino horn was more valuable than gold.

To combat this, the UK Government tightened controls in relation to the export of rhino horn. From October 2010 no rhino horn is eligible to leave the country unless it meets the strict criteria (e.g such as genuine museum trade). This will help combat the increase in rhino horn antiques selling in auction houses which are frequently exported to Asian countries ostensibly for personal purposes but are far more likely to end up in illegal traditional medicine markets. In this way, it will help to combat the global supply of rhino horn and help fight the illegal trade and supply. Animal Health contacted UK auction houses and antique trade associations to explain the revised rules. In addition, the UK Priority for CITES Traditional Medicine was amended in July 2010 to include rhino horn.

²⁴ Wildlife Trade Law: A UK Enforcer's Factfile, VII, 2009

Emerging Threat ~ Ayurvedic Medicine

3.3.5 Ayurvedic medicine is a system of traditional medicine native to the Indian sub continent and in the West it is seen as alternative or complementary medicine. It has been reported that the use of Hoodia and Pygeum africanum are of concern in nutritional supplements (particularly from the USA).

Plan Owner Update

Overall Objective

Increase the number of disruption activities and detections of illegal trade in CITES priority species by: Increasing the amount of targeted compliance activity, increasing the number of intelligence submissions and intelligence products produced, improve the quality of Analytical Assessments and complete in agreed time-scales, and increase the number of investigations and enforcement outcomes.

How has the priority delivery group (as a whole) progressed over the last two years?

The CPDG has learned a great deal over the last two years about the mechanisms to employ in order to drive forward the CITES priorities. The key missing factor hindering the group's ability to tackle each CITES priority has always been the lack of current quality intelligence. We have overcome this by developing a programme of inspections and enforcement actions for each priority, which has then enabled us to build our strategies for all PIE activities. We now have a much clearer picture of the overall trade in caviar for instance, traditional Chinese medicines is half way along that track and once all the data has been analysed we should find there has been an enormous leap in knowledge of the tortoise trade.

There have been two global Interpol exercises in the last year, very much inspired by the UK CITES priority model, and these have driven a good deal of our activities in the last year. Operation Tram involved the targeting of illegal trade in TCMs and Operation Ramp targeted reptiles, which in the UK was concentrated on our priority area, tortoises.

The work carried out on TCMs thus far has given us a useful insight into what the issues are in terms of illegal trade and the remedies needed to improve the level of compliance. However there is much more work to be done in this area as only a relatively small number of retail premises have been inspected and the preventive work has yet to begin. A large and complex operation targeting a major importer/wholesaler served to demonstrate why a multi agency approach is necessary in tackling wildlife crime. Without the support of other agencies, it is unlikely that a case of this magnitude could have been successfully executed as it was in this instance.

The work carried out by the group on tortoises under Operation Ramp has been the most significant in that it had the buy-in from the outset of almost all UK police forces. This meant that police officers from all around the country were able to get involved in local inspections of retail outlets selling tortoises and submit intelligence on what they had found. This can only bode well when we look to develop future priorities.

Caviar is the first priority we have taken through the entire process from inspections, intelligence assessments, enforcement action and preventative solutions. A wrap-up document was produced by the NWCU that outlined all the work done and conclusions drawn, which was subsequently signed off by the TCG.

The amount of intelligence being reported on ramie has been scarce and so it was decided that it would be better placed if it was moved to Intelligence Requirement status. More research can then be carried out to see whether it justifies a priority status or can be dealt with in some other way.

Ivory is the only priority left at the moment that has not been started. The group had deliberately moved it to the back of the queue in order to wait for forensic research to be done to develop a system to accurately age ivory. Having got the funding in place, sadly it appears this is no longer an option as it has not been possible to obtain verified samples.

Rhino horn has become a major issue in the last year with huge prices being fetched at auction and the horns then being exported, often legally, to China destined to be used in TCM's. In response to the Groups suggestion stricter measures have been taken by the UK that severely limits the issuing of re-export permits for rhino horn, thus closing that loophole. The German authorities have done likewise and the UK has been

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encouraging other EU countries to follow suit. It was also decided that because of its intended use, rhino horn should be brought under the umbrella of the TM priority and dealt with accordingly.

How has the group progressed its overall objective(s)?

I believe the group has made solid progress towards meeting its objectives given that each area taken on has to be started from scratch. Undoubtedly the amount of intelligence has increased markedly from where we started and that is due to the manner we have gone about collecting it. Each priority we have begun to tackle has led to a surge in intelligence activity. The work we started on tortoises through Operation Ramp has surpassed anything we could have hoped for in terms of raising awareness of police officers and in generating enough intelligence to form a meaningful opinion of the legal/illegal trade. The fact that so many police forces took part and that officers identified 570 premises to visit, surpassed anything we could have imagined at the outset. Police officers are still submitting visit reports and work continues on progressing the 79 Releases of Information released thus far. As can be seen from the stats, there are a significant number of enforcement actions currently being undertaken, with no doubt more to follow. In comparison to the significant non-compliance problems identified in the internal trade of tortoises, the importers of reptiles from third countries appear to have a very clear understanding of their responsibilities. Over 60 shipments were examined during the operation and all were found to comply with CITES, although two were less compliant when it came to valuation, having over £18,000 of under declared tax taken from them.

There was a highly successful media campaign for both Operation Tram and Ramp with over 400 hits at the time with media outlets reporting the UK work worldwide. The operations were given added weight by the then DEFRA Minister Huw Irranca Davies, and more recently by his successor Richard Benyon, giving their support to the initiatives.

There have been a number of significant prosecutions, leading to some impressive sentences being handed out, the best of which was the 2½ years for the taking and attempted smuggling of Peregrine Falcon eggs. These cases attracted considerable media interest and a clear message has been sent to those who are involved, or thinking about being involved in these sorts of crime, that they are taken seriously by the courts.

Is the Action Plan being progressed? If not, why not? Do the actions meet the overall objective(s)?

The Action Plan is being progressed and most actions are being completed within the proposed time frame and are meeting the objectives set for the CPDG. The two Interpol exercises have certainly pushed the work along in a positive way, however we need to take stock of where we are with both of these priorities so we can continue with our PIE plan.

Do you foresee any future issues (in the next 5 years) that will pose a threat to the priority group continuing or succeeding in meeting its objective(s)?

It is difficult to forecast what the position is going to be like during the next five years, safe to say however that things are not going to get any easier. As I write, funding for the NWCUC has still not been agreed, and even if/when that is resolved, it's quite possible that in another three years time they will find themselves in the same position again. Next years budgets have not yet been finalised in many departments and until they are, it is not possible to know what effect it will have on the CPDG being able to meet its objectives. At the moment it looks as if the group itself will survive the impending cuts and continue to function in its current format, but whether we can count on support from as many police forces as we have been able to is another matter.

4.0 Key Findings ~ Freshwater Pearl Mussels

- Criminality relating to FWPM shows no signs of decreasing during the strategic period
- Predominantly an issue within Scotland and therefore should remain a priority there
- The two aspects of FWPM criminality are *the taking of* which is being managed well through the Tasking and Coordinating process in Scotland and *disturbance* which is being addressed by FWPM Priority Delivery Group under the guise of Operation Caesar

4.1 The illegal interference or taking of FWPM's continues and shows no signs of changing. Ten incidents were reported during both year one and year two, although relatively low in volume, each are significant due to the following that have occurred during the strategic period;

- Persistent pearl fishing is happening repeatedly at the same sites
- Three Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) were downgraded due to the occurrence of pearl fishing
- Ultimately fishing leads to much smaller populations which are then much less able to cope with any other disturbance in the future
- Disturbances at three separate sites in the last year

Populations continue to be in significant decline. The JNCC species assessment for freshwater pearl mussel states that the range of the species is decreasing, populations are decreasing and the future prospects for the species are bad and deteriorating. Furthermore, it has been estimated that Scottish populations could be wiped out in less than 20 years (Cosgrove and Young, 2000).

4.2 Incidents relating to freshwater pearl mussels reported to the NWCU have only ever occurred in Scotland. Though there are other populations present across the UK (Northern Ireland and Cumbria for example) there is little information available to suggest that deliberate criminality is occurring outside of Scotland²⁵.

4.3 Scottish Natural Heritage is part of the Scottish Wildlife Crime Tasking and Coordinating process and help put into context the environmental impact of those incidents. Developments are currently being made for SEPA's inclusion at future Scottish TCG's to progress this issue.

Plan Owner Update

Overall Objective

Raise awareness of criminality affecting freshwater pearl mussels in order to facilitate intelligence and incident reporting, leading to increased prevention and enforcement action.

How is the overall objective progressing? Are there any significant changes e.g. a prioritisation of work load?

The plan's priority continues to be on prevention, principally by raising awareness so that the greatest amount of information flows into police and the NWCU, to generate good intelligence and aid enforcement.

Prevention

"Operation Caesar" was launched in May 2010, tasking Scottish police forces with raising awareness about criminality affecting pearl mussels. The operation focussed on highlight and distributing a leaflet about pearl mussel crime in local, targeted locations. The issue also featured on the national media. SNH also distributed awareness raising leaflets and posters to all commercial rafting companies operating in Scotland during summer 2010, in order that their staff are aware and encouraging them to increase awareness with their clients. Training has also been provided to fisheries biologists across Scotland during 2010 to further

²⁵ Except when in 2008 the Environment Agency and Cumbria Police secured the first successful prosecution in the UK for damage caused to endangered freshwater pearl mussels, and their habitat. The defendant pleaded guilty of offences under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975 and the Water Resources Act 1991. The charges related to an incident in February 2008 when he took an excavator into the River Irt, without Environment Agency permission, causing extensive damage to over 1km of the river and wildlife.

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raise awareness of criminality affecting pearl mussels (four courses). Leaflets are also being disseminated via SEPA and the Forestry Commission.

How many meetings have you had since the last update? And what is the overall summary of the progress?

There have been no meeting since the last update and it is proposed that the next group meeting take place in March. Progress has been good with the strategy felt to be working well. Actions were confirmed, particularly to task police forces with raising awareness by active distribution of a leaflet.

Is the Action Plan being progressed?

The Action Plan has been updated by the plan owner and it is felt to have the correct focus and spread of actions. Using the experience of group members, the action plan was compared against other priority plans and considered to be focussing on the correct areas.

Have there been any notable successes?

The police launch of 'Operation Caesar' appears to have been successful, with a significant amount of publicity generated and good interest from a range of interests.

Are there any specific issues/problems?

It is hoped that the specific tasking of local police stations/officers under Operation Caesar will help improve the consistency in approach between police forces.

Have you any ongoing cases you wish to update or comment upon?

A particularly worrying find over the last year has been the result of damage caused by criminal acts on pearl mussel populations. Three Special Areas of Conservation (sites with the highest level of international wildlife protection) in Scotland have had their status downgraded during the past year as a direct result of damage from illegal activity. This finding formed the basis for the launch of 'Operation Caesar' and most clearly shows the damage illegal activity is causing.

Is there any update on funding?

Funding from SNH was secured resulting in a reprint of the Scottish anti-pearl fishing leaflet, which has been used to further distribute the leaflet via SEPA and Forestry Commission offices. Resources are being secured to try and finance a pearl mussel conservation project under the EU LIFE programme. The project may end up being worth a total of about £4 million; however any wildlife crime component would be a small element of that as it would be restricted to Scotland and not relevant to many of the other proposed conservation actions. The priority plan leader is currently trying to secure funds from SNH, fishery trusts and boards and other partners. It is clear that, due to ongoing budget constraints, contributions from the police will necessarily have to be officer time etc, rather than cash.

Have you any comment to add to the Strategic Assessment section for your priority?

- Reports of damage to pearl mussel populations during 2010 appear to be of a similar number to the past couple of years. Again, this year some of the incidents have caused significant local damage. Two pollution incidents have been very severe, with at least one probably killing nearly all pearl mussels <15 years old in one stretch of river. Populations of pearl mussels that contain such relatively young mussels (young, because the species lives for >100 years) are incredibly rare in the world and therefore such damage is of potential international significance.
- It is worth pointing out that awareness is now such that incidents are being recorded and actively investigated. This is encouraging and shows the priority plan is working for this vulnerable species. However it is important to continue such work as there is some evidence that reporting possible pearl fishing incidents is, in some places, not resulting in follow up action.

5.1.0 Poaching ~ Key Findings

- Although almost seven out of every ten reports are categorised as suspicious (meaning poaching was not seen but suspected), it does indicate that the public are concerned enough to report the activity to police. Additionally, these types of incidents coincide with damage caused to land and anti social behaviour being experienced by those residing in rural communities
- Geographical variations are evident, with the North East ACPO region causing the most concern, (primarily Humberside) and this is consistent with hotspots for hare coursing and deer poaching. It is likely that any operational activity targeting these two crime types in these areas will impact upon other forms of poaching
- The effective combating of illegal hare coursing should be seen as a mechanism that will allow inroads to be made into wider rural crime issues
- The management of poaching and hare coursing within some regions is already underway to some extent. The North Region strategy meeting started out from a meeting of Yorkshire Forces Wildlife Crime Officers to discuss the issues that they had locally, cross border crime, cross border initiatives and cooperation, the exchange of intelligence, follow up enquiries and policies to deal with poaching and rural crime initiatives
- The key to ensuring resources are allocated to wildlife crime in force areas may be in emphasising its association with rural crime and by ensuring its rationale is centred on citizen focus
- The success of the SWTCG and the north of England rural crime meetings show the value of regional collaboration. Unless the introduction of regional PEG meetings takes place across the rest of England¹, coordinated enforcement, intelligence sharing, regional priority focus and preventative action will remain disjointed and have lesser impact

Crime Enablers / Barriers

- The registration number of vehicles used by offenders is often reported at the same time as the offence; however the offenders do not reside at the same address as the one known to police. This is cited as the single greatest problem enabling hare coursing. The registration number is often the only traceable clue left after an incident of hare coursing but increasingly the investigation will never progress beyond this stage
- Police wildlife crime officers have cited that legislation is out of date and difficult to interpret. To address this to some extent; the Poaching Priority Officer has put together a guide for Force Communication Centre's for procedures to deal with both deer and fish poaching
- Neighbourhood Management have a different set of priorities that do not always include hare coursing or poaching and it is believed that they are under more pressure to tackle more 'urban' problems such as criminal damage or anti social behaviour
- The one year partnership funding of a dedicated Poaching Project Officer in England and Wales ceased in October 2010. The post was an advisory role which provided guidance to enforcement agencies in regard to poaching, appropriate legislation; investigative strategies and coordination for operations such as Rural Net. The loss of this resource may also present challenges when addressing cross border problems that are common with poaching and hare coursing

Poaching, Hare Coursing and Rural Crime, its Impact and Response

5.1.0 The occurrence of poaching and hare coursing is understood to be widespread, affecting most parts of the UK. The impact upon rural communities can be financial as well as emotional with damage to property and intimidation commonplace. The key to ensuring resources are allocated to wildlife crime in force areas may be in emphasising its association with rural crime and by ensuring its rationale is centred on citizen focus.

Poaching - Other

5.1.1 Other types of poaching (not including deer, fish or hare coursing) are the second most reported type of wildlife crime after hare coursing (15% / 1401). Incidents within this category can apply where the targeted species is not known or the species is not one of the priority species. Although almost seven out of every ten reports of poaching - other are categorised as suspicious (meaning poaching was not seen but

suspected), it does indicate that landowners are concerned enough to report the activity to police. Additionally, these types of incidents coincide with damage caused to land and anti social behaviour being experienced by those residing in rural communities.

5.1.2 Geographical variations are evident, with the North East ACPO region causing the most concern, (primarily Humberside) and this is consistent with hotspots for hare coursing and deer poaching. It is likely that any operational activity targeting these two crime types in these areas will impact upon other forms of poaching.

The Forces' Response

5.1.3 The management of poaching and hare coursing within some regions is already underway to some extent. The North Region strategy meeting started out from a meeting of Yorkshire Forces Wildlife Crime Officers to discuss the issues that they had locally, cross border crime, cross border initiatives and cooperation, the exchange of intelligence, follow up enquiries and policies to deal with poaching and rural crime initiatives. As a result of the initial meetings other forces became involved and extended the membership of the meeting to include all forces covering the north of England²⁶. The quarterly meetings that are currently held now incorporate practical policing issues that deal with rural crime, poaching and wildlife crime at ground level, thus avoiding many of the issues surrounding force politics.

The success of the Scottish Wildlife Tasking and Coordinating Group and the north of England rural crime meetings show the value of regional collaboration. Unless the introduction of regional PEG meetings takes place across the rest of England²⁷, coordinated enforcement, intelligence sharing, regional priority focus and preventative action will remain disjointed and have lesser impact.

Crime Enablers ~ Links to other Criminality

5.1.4 Those engaging in coursing will use vehicles that may be untaxed, uninsured and running on red diesel. These factors may facilitate the impounding of the vehicle which may disrupt activity in the short term. Moreover, it is common for offenders to be active in many other priority crimes; poaching, criminal damage, metal and plant theft, drugs and violence. The effective combating of illegal hare coursing should be seen as a mechanism that will allow inroads to be made into wider rural crime issues. Rural crime in itself is also an important issue due to the following factors;

- The theft of livestock is on the increase and some instances are believed to be on a commercial scale
- The National Farmers Union has seen growing interest in Farmwatch due to the rise in rural crime
- Criminals will be attracted to anything valuable and the theft of plant and farmer's quad bikes are being targeted. Some machinery can be worth in excess of £100,000 and therefore is bound to be desirable. It raises questions though when some force areas do not dedicate as much resources to these types of thefts as would be allocated to the theft of a second hand car in an urban area.

Crime Enablers ~ Non / Incorrect Registration Details

5.1.5 The registration number of vehicles used by offenders is often reported at the same time as the offence; however the offenders do not reside at the same address as the one known to police. This is cited as the single greatest problem enabling hare coursing. The registration number is often the only traceable clue left after an incident of hare coursing but increasingly the investigation will never progress beyond this stage.

The following issues have been reported as barriers to achieving successful convictions and are likely to be of relevance to all forces:

Barriers ~ Seizing Property

²⁶ Lincolnshire, Cheshire, Derbyshire, Merseyside, Humberside, West, South & North York's, GMP, Northumbria, Cleveland, Cumbria, Durham & Lancashire, supported by NWCU

²⁷ The Welsh ACPO region already have proven collaborative success in relation to wildlife crime

5.1.6 It has been cited on occasions that the most effective way to disrupt hare coursing is to seize the offenders' dog(s). Police officers are reluctant to do this due to the expensive kennelling costs; some cases have ultimately been successful in passing the cost on to the offender. Recently this claim was rejected by the court as it was believed to be too excessive a fine for the offence committed. Consequently in some force areas the senior management teams are advising not to seize dogs, this is only likely to increase in light of the budget constraints.

Barriers ~ Lack of Effective and Practical Legislation

5.1.7 Police wildlife crime officers have cited that legislation is out of date and difficult to interpret. To address this to some extent; the Poaching Priority Officer has put together a guide for Force Communication Centre's for procedures to deal with both deer and fish poaching.

5.1.8 The one year partnership funding²⁸ of a dedicated Poaching Project Officer in England and Wales ceased in October 2010. The post was an advisory role which provided guidance to law enforcement, Statutory Nature Conservation Organisations (SNCO) and those with a vested interest in regards to the rural environment. Considerable inroads were made in the relation to investigative strategies and the coordination of rural initiatives, following significant interest from the media leading to improved public awareness.

5.2.0 Deer Poaching ~ Key Findings

- Deer poaching currently accounts for 8% of wildlife crime and is increasing
- Almost one third of all deer poaching is reported in Scotland (32% / 245)
- The shooting of deer is lessening whilst the coursing of deer with dogs increasing
- Deer populations across the UK are moving into urban areas, increasing deer and human interactions and may account for the rise in activity

5.2.1 Poaching can occur at all times wherever there are deer populations and currently accounts for 8% (767) of reported wildlife crime. This problem may be widespread in some areas and looks to be increasing, by as much as 40% during the current strategic period. London and Wales were the only ACPO regions not to have reported increases.

5.2.2 At a national level, deer poaching predominantly affects the north of the UK. Scotland records the greatest level of deer poaching overall (32% / 245), and it is now considered widespread throughout the region. This is followed by the North East (17% / 129) and Eastern ACPO (13% / 102) regions, both of whom have experienced substantial increases in activity during this period; 35% and 92% respectively.

Modus Operandi

5.2.3 Around one third (260) of reported incidents have been sub categorised as 'Suspicious Activity' where poaching is only suspected. As many of these were reported during the hunting seasons there is always the concern that this could have been legal activity. Shooting also accounted for 18% (140) of incidents, though the complainant is often the landowner who knows that permission has not been granted. Furthermore, the finding of grallochs accounts for one quarter (192) of incidents and is much more indicative of poaching. There also appears to have been a shift in the method of killing during the strategic period. Shooting has decreased while deer coursing (hunting with dogs) has increased.

²⁸ Jointly funded by BASC, Environment Agency and The Deer Initiative

Peri Urban Populations of Deer

5.2.4 Movement of deer into urban areas is expanding, which has also significantly increased the number and range of interactions between people, wildlife and deer²⁹. It is suspected that certain species (roe and muntjac) are being attracted into green space. This however is creating a number of problems including damage to gardens, allotments and parks, attacks on pets by muntjac deer and vice versa, deer becoming trapped in railings or waterways (therefore requiring emergency service assistance), there is also the occurrence of violent attacks on deer by humans. Wildlife Trusts have reported similar problems; increasingly local authorities are trying to create more green spaces which are also ideal habitat for deer. This raises concerns that there may be an increase in activities such as poaching or deer coursing in urban areas where the problems did not previously exist.

5.3.0 Fish Poaching ~ Key Findings

- Fish poaching is increasing but this only applies to certain ACPO and ACPOS regions
- Scotland reports over 34% of fish poaching incidents and the amount is rising
- The demand for salmon within and from outside the UK is high
- Wide nets are being used to take fish and is indicative of poaching on a commercial scale

5.3.1 Fish poaching currently accounts for 5% (484) of all wildlife crime and appears to be on the rise, with incidents increasing by over one fifth during the strategic period (51)³⁰. Where the type of fish is known, salmon (15%) and trout (9%) are most desired although this is subjective to each ACPO and ACPOS region.

Geographical Distribution

5.3.2 Over one third (34% / 166) of fish poaching occurred in Scotland during the strategic period and the amount being reported has increased throughout this period and therefore poses the greatest threat to poaching overall. Other ACPO regions across the UK appear to be suffering from fish poaching also, but to a much lesser extent. Furthermore, the picture for the UK is fragmented as no one consistent trend exists; given that many ACPO and ACPOS regions reported decreases at the same time as those reporting increases. These variations could be dependent on fish stocks, operational activity and awareness raising tactics being used in different regions.

Emerging Threat - Market Values and Disposal Routes

5.3.3 The price of salmon is currently rising faster than it has done for many years, following an outbreak of the fish disease, Infectious Salmon Anaemia (ISA), which has damaged the industry in Chile. The market value for salmon in the UK is expected to continue to rise from 2010 onwards and may impact further on crime levels.

5.3.4 Wide monofilament nets are being used which would indicate large numbers of fish are being taken and intelligence confirms catches are taken to fish merchants. The use of nets in this manner is indiscriminate and one incident led to the finding of 13 salmon and sea trout, one cormorant and two young otters (all deceased) and is unlikely to be an isolated incident.

²⁹ The management of roe deer in peri-urban Scotland, Forest Research

³⁰ Year on year

5.4.0 Hare Coursing ~ Key Findings

- Hare coursing currently accounts for almost one fifth of reported wildlife crime
- This is predominantly affecting just four ACPO & ACPOS regions; Eastern, South East, North East and Scotland. The increase of activity by 130% during the last two years occurred primarily in these regions
- Regional meetings are already underway in the North of England and Scotland

5.4.1 Hare coursing is the greatest volume contributing to wildlife crime accounting for almost one quarter (24% / 2242) of all reported incidents during the strategic period³¹. Hare coursing is disproportionately affecting ACPO and ACPOS regions located on the agriculture intensive east side of the UK. The four regions most predominantly affected should govern where hare coursing should remain a priority;

- Eastern region accounts for 44% (986)
- South East accounts for 18% (396)
- North East accounts 15% (346)
- Scotland accounts for 11% (247)

Concentrating efforts in these four areas alone will be the most effective and greater coordination within these ACPO and ACPOS regions may drive this.

5.4.2 In addition, the reporting of hare coursing has grown significantly during the last two years increasing by 130% (884) from year one into year two. This can be primarily attributed to Lincolnshire where hare coursing increased by 921% (672). Essex (97% / 60) and Thames Valley (844% / 76) also reported substantial rises in activity during the same period. Some of this increase could be due to awareness raising within the media and also by partner agencies such as Countryside Alliance and British Association for Shooting and Conservation encouraging their member base to report incidents to the police.

Plan Owner Updates

Overall Objective

To increase the level of awareness of poaching and hare coursing as serious wildlife crimes and build better trust and relationships between the law enforcement agencies and local rural communities, both leading to increased prevention activity, intelligence flows and enforcement success (Scotland).

Scotland

How has the priority delivery group (as a whole) progressed over the last 2 years?

The Scottish Poaching and Hare Coursing Priority Group was established in August 2008. The Group is still focused on these key objectives and we have evolved the group to include other relevant experience. Since its formation two new organisations have joined, these being the Association of Salmon Fishery Boards (ASFB) and The British Deer Society (BDS). Looking to 2011 we will be inviting a new Scottish government agency to join – Marine Scotland. At the last meeting of the Group (we hold 3-4 meetings per year) we reviewed our progress and direction for next year. This has resulted in a new Action Plan for 2011 with most of the main elements of the 2008/9 and 2009/10 plans having been delivered. In 2011 we will also consider if there needs to be representation on the group from any other police force area in Scotland.

How has the group progressed its overall objective(s)?

The objectives we have set out for this priority have been progressed by a collaborative Action Plan with key responsibility for each of the three key areas of Prevention, Intelligence and Enforcement being owned by a member of the group. Ownership of an area was determined by the ability of that person and their organisation to deliver results. Within this, responsibility for individual actions has been tasked out to group members. Progress has been measured by a combination of media coverage and success, profile and

³¹ Improvements in the categorisation of incidents at the NWCU mean that of those reports received, 43% (966) have been coded as 'Suspicious Activity', which implies that hare coursing was suspected but the actual activity itself was not directly observed

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attendance at our launch events, increases in flows and levels of intelligence to NWCUC and more recently in the decrease in hare coursing incidents. Success and progress has also been measured by peer feedback. Promoting collaborative working on the ground between law enforcement agencies and those working on the land has also been important and will continue to be so. This approach will continue in 2011.

Is the *Action Plan* being progressed?

Yes, two Action Plans have been delivered and we now have a new Action Plan for 2011. Some key elements of this are:

- Identify force areas we need to focus activity on
- Secure further increases in intelligence flows to highlight resourcing requirements
- Promote results and successes – operations and resulting prosecutions and convictions
- Demonstrate to the local community the results achieved by cooperation
- Build charging, prosecution and conviction rates into our reporting statistics
- Focus media on public interest/tabloid – not just rural and farming press
- Explore new joiners – Marine Scotland, other Force areas
- Establish more formal links with similar initiatives in England and Wales
- Update our suite of posters and leaflets
- Hold three focused events in separate appropriate locations in one week period - Fish Poaching, Deer Poaching and Hare Coursing
- Identify a celebrity “face” to lead campaigns in 2011

Do you foresee any future issues (in the next 5 years) that will pose a threat to the priority group continuing or succeeding in meeting its objective(s)?

Funding will be an issue. While private organisations are able to support such initiatives with staff and member time and other in kind supporting resources, hard cash to pay for material, events and production of posters and leaflets is just not sustainable.

There may also be possible changes and impacts resulting from the Wildlife and Natural Environment Bill which is passing through the Scottish Parliament. There are possible changes to the present powers that sit with landowners and gamekeepers with regard to poaching and also changes to the use of single witness evidence for poaching offences.

England and Wales ~ Not Received

6.0 Raptor Persecution ~ Key Findings

- Six out of ten incidents of raptor persecution refer to the deliberate killing and injuring of raptors
- Over one quarter of these incidents occur in Scotland, though there has been a decrease over the last twelve months
- The disturbance and destruction of nests is an issue for raptors, though establishing whether this type of activity is intentional is problematic
- Data held by Raptor Study Groups should be used more to illustrate the impact of criminality upon local populations and to strengthen impact statements at court

6.1 Raptor persecution currently accounts for 3% (326³²) of all reported wildlife crime. Though this may appear a low number in comparison to other areas of wildlife criminality, research has shown that the illegal killing of some species has directly contributed to their decline. The laying of poisoned baits shows no signs of abating and has been responsible for the death of key endangered species. This section also provides an insight as to other types of persecution that may also be affecting their population growth, ultimately essential to their survival.

6.2 Raptors are being persecuted in a number of ways and improved incident recording and the inclusion of partner data has enabled the identification of the most pertinent issues;

- The deliberate killing or injuring of raptors
- Disturbance
- Raptors as a commodity

Deliberate killing or injuring

6.3 The deliberate killing or injuring of raptors refers to either confirmed poisonings, shootings or the illegal use of traps and snares. During the current strategic period six out of ten incidents of raptor persecution (58% / 179) reported to the NWCUC referred to one of these methods³³. In addition, there were 24 further reports of suspected poisonings which were not confirmed by scientific testing, meaning this figure could be greater.

6.4 During the strategic period, every ACPO region has seen an increase in incidents specifically within this category. However, Scotland has seen incidents decrease by one third (33% / 11) from year one into year two. While this decline is encouraging, it should be borne in mind that Scotland reported the greatest number of incidents (27% / 55) during both year one and year two, second only to the Eastern ACPO region who reported a total of 23 incidents during the current period.

Disturbance

6.5 The disturbance and interference of nest sites accounts for 24% (78) of reported raptor persecution and appears to be most common in Scotland, although incidents are reported in all areas of the UK. Development and the felling of trees are factors also affecting raptors in the same manner as other wildlife with the destruction of nest sites, although this does not appear to be a substantial issue, accounting for around 4% of all raptor persecution incidents. While there are a number of reports of nest disturbance it is difficult to measure where it has happened intentionally. The informant is often aware of the presence of nests and their significance, whereas the perpetrators (often walkers, photographers or tourists) may not be. Difficulties arise when considering how to address this without publishing the presence of a nest in alerting the public to not disturb it.

Raptors as a Commodity

Offences within this category refer to wild caught birds, stolen eggs or chicks, the non registration of birds under the Wildlife and Countryside Act or offences under COTES and accounts for 14% (45) of incidents

³² Including poisonings

³³ One fifth of these incidents (36) were reported by the RSPB but were not reported by the originating police force

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

of raptor persecution. The selling of birds without the necessary certification may only appear to be a paperwork issue; when in reality without the enforcement of such regulations raptors being taken from the wild may increase.

Plan Owner Updates

Overall Objective

Raise community trust and awareness to facilitate intelligence and incident reporting, leading to increased prevention and enforcement activity relating to raptor persecution.

Scotland

The Scottish Raptor Priority Group had been in a perilous position because of uncertainty over its leadership and direction because the Group Chair and ACPOS lead on Wildlife Crime retired in December 2010 and to date a new ACPOS lead has not been confirmed. This confirmation is expected in late January or February 2011. The intention at the interim meeting in January was to reinforce the remit of the meeting and to seek to endorse a shared aim to reduce the incidence of raptor crime. The structure of the group will also be considered with the intention of ensuring an ability to deliver NIM priorities. Scottish Government representatives will attend this meeting to emphasise the need for shared understanding of aims and intentions.

In some geographical areas, Grampian for example, there have been no confirmed incidents of poisonings in 2010. Whilst no analysis has been carried out, the impact of the Raptor Watch initiative and the positive contribution of the local PAW must be considered positive. Given that local/regional PAW committees are in various stages of development in five other force areas there is the potential for further positive impact through partnership working.

One area that continues to cause disruption is the inconsistency in statistics. The Police must work with the Scottish Crime Recording Standard; this is an ethical recording standard and a Scottish Government requirement. Other sources of statistical information do not adopt the same recording standard so inevitably there is conflict. This conflict is so significant it undermines the Raptor Priority Group. Work is commencing in Scotland to try and address this. Consideration of whether the same problem exists in England and Wales may be appropriate to allow a common standard to be adopted. In conclusion the operational and tactical situation in Scotland is relatively healthy with some positive work on-going; the strategic situation in contrast is a risk which needs addressing.

England and Wales

How has the priority delivery group (as a whole) progressed over the last two years?

Whilst certain species of raptors have been a wildlife crime priority since 2002 progress has admittedly been very slow. Two meetings of interested parties have been held identifying a number of initiatives that might be progressed. Unfortunately not all interested parties have since engaged in the process of finding which should be progressed further. It has long been clear that there are issues with raptor persecution that are not encountered when considering other wildlife crime priorities. Even the extent of the problem is contested. Those engaged with the priority are often also engaged in other work relating to the management of upland areas where raptor persecution is probably at its most common and/or with other wildlife crime priorities. For these reasons it is important that the views of all our stakeholders are not only heard but properly considered.

How has the group progressed its overall objective(s)?

During the year we have explored the manner in which the overall objective might be progressed but have been unable to reach consensus as to what work we can usefully take forward. Whilst we are fortunate that all those who have an interest in the matter are prepared to attend meetings of the group there is a need for positive contribution to identified areas of work.

Is the Action Plan being progressed? If not, why not? Do the actions meet the overall objective(s)?

The PIE leads are to progress a number of initiatives suggested when the group last met with a view to meeting the aspirational objective of: *Promoting UK biodiversity by enabling raptors to find their natural population levels without the negative influences of human persecution by raising trust and awareness*

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throughout communities to facilitate intelligence and incident reporting, leading to increased prevention and enforcement activity relating to raptor persecution of all types.

We intend to address this by identifying and then becoming involved as much as possible in a region where there are land managers who are sympathetic to the needs of raptors but persecution of raptors nevertheless remains a problem. This will provide opportunity for all stakeholders to make positive contributions aimed at preventing and detecting offences. Success will provide a template to be utilised in other regions.

Do you foresee any future issues (in the next 5 years) that will pose a threat to the priority group continuing or succeeding in meeting its objective(s)?

Statutory authorities are of course under financial pressure and as such the level of resource that the group can rely on over an extended period of time is not known but given the present economic situation it is likely that many involved in the group will find it increasingly difficult to commit resources. As such it is that in order for substantial progress to be made a project officer will be needed. The plan owner is exploring the feasibility of such an initiative.

Species Specific Analysis

6.6 The table below contains the number of breeding pairs³⁴ against the number of incidents of each of the priority species and other species have accounted for during the strategic period³⁵.

Species	Pop. Count (no. pairs)	No. of reported incidents	%
White tailed eagle	36	4	11.11%
Red kite	431	29	6.73%
Peregrine falcon	1400	66	4.71%
Goshawk	400	14	3.50%
Golden eagle	442	9	2.04%
Osprey	148	3	2.03%
Hen harrier	691	11	1.59%
Buzzard	38000	86	0.23%
Sparrowhawk	39000	14	0.04%

Each of the priority species is examined in more depth to understand the threat posed to them. Where available, peer-reviewed scientific papers showing the impact of human persecution upon those species has also been included within this section.

Golden Eagle

6.7 The golden eagle was subjected to four confirmed poisonings, all within shooting estates in Scotland during the strategic period. Its current status is Amber and should afford the highest protection. A paper published in 2004 stated that the population is vulnerable and that in the absence of adult mortality (due to persecution) the population would increase³⁶. Its preferred habitat is large open spaces free of human disturbance and five incidents of this manner were reported, however disturbance during the critical nesting period is especially harmful. The creation of eight Special Protection Areas across Scotland and the setting of favourable status targets in 2006 were reviewed by Scottish Natural Heritage.

Golden Eagle Conservation Framework³⁷

Overview: Illegal persecution associated with land managed for driven grouse shooting is the most important factor slowing the recovery of golden eagles in Scotland and preventing their range expansion into new areas of suitable habitat, including northern England.

Summary: The failure of the Scottish golden eagle population to meet favourable conservation status is largely due to the marked failures to meet favourable status in those regions where grouse moor

³⁴ British Trust for Ornithology

³⁵ This count does not include incidents of non confirmed poisonings

³⁶ Modelling the effects of persecution on the population dynamics of golden eagles in Scotland, Whitfield et al, 2004

³⁷ Whitfield, D.P., Fielding, A.H., McLeod, D.R.A. and Haworth, P.F. (2008). A conservation framework for golden eagles: implications for their conservation and management in Scotland. *Scottish Natural Heritage Commissioned Report No. 193*

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management prevails. The failure to meet favourable conservation status in these 'grouse moor' regions is largely through the continued illegal killing of eagles.

Persecution is the most serious constraint facing the Scottish golden eagle population, mainly through its effects on adult and sub-adult survival. Evidence of persecution spans many decades. Historical and recent reductions of persecution in some areas of Scotland indicate that golden eagle populations respond positively to policies which are effective in tackling this issue.

Not only is the conservation status of the national population being compromised by persecution, but in several eastern Highland and Southern Upland regions there are far fewer eagles than would be expected given the apparently suitable habitats. This could lead to regional extinctions. The rarity of golden eagles in England is probably a result of a combination of the shortage of potential recruits coming from Scotland, due largely to persecution in areas where potential recruits are most likely to originate, and to raptor persecution in upland areas of England. The highest national priority for the conservation and management of golden eagles in Scotland is to tackle persecution in those areas where it still persists³⁸.

Goshawk

6.8 Although not deemed to be of conservation concern (currently classified as Green³⁹), the goshawk is under threat mainly from the trading aspect of persecution, exemplified in the following section provided by JNCC;

Goshawks were extirpated from the UK in the 19th century due to persecution by game shooting interests. The species was subsequently re-established in the 1960-70s by a combination of the deliberate release and unintentional escape of falconers' birds⁴⁰. After a slow increase in the 1990s, aided by their occupation of large blocks of plantation forests, the UK population in 2005 was estimated to stand at around 400 pairs⁴¹ (range 251-424 pairs), dispersed between a small number of relatively isolated clusters. Despite the species being a generalist predator, able to take a wide variety of prey, and with abundant suitable habitat distributed across the UK, goshawks have not expanded their range significantly. The major factor limiting the expansion and recovery of this species is illegal killing by game rearing interests, this being the most important factor limiting population growth in England⁴² and Scotland⁴³ and without which there would be many more goshawks. The large publicly-owned (Forestry Commission) conifer blocks occupied by goshawks are important because they are free of persecution and offer undisturbed nesting areas. Birds dispersing from such forests are vulnerable to illegal killing, especially at pheasant release pens. Returns of ringed birds indicate that of known causes of death, 42% were deliberately taken by man, despite their full legal protection⁴⁴. Goshawks also remain in demand in falconry and are advertised, on average, at c£1000⁴⁵ per bird. There is also direct evidence (through convictions and DNA analysis) of illegal taking from the wild and false claims of captive breeding⁴⁶. Despite the availability of captive bred birds, some illegal taking persists. Illegal killing and taking of goshawks can, separately or in combination, be locally significant and detrimentally affect the ability of goshawk populations to recover and expand their range.

There have only been two incidents regarding the direct killing of goshawks and neither was confirmed. Almost all other reports (8) received are in reference to non registration with Animal Health as required under the Wildlife and Countryside Act⁴⁷.

³⁸ Summary provided by RSPB

³⁹ British Trust for Ornithology

⁴⁰ Marquiss, M. 1982. The goshawk in Britain. British Birds 75, 243-260

⁴¹ <http://www.rbbp.org.uk/>; also Baker *et al.* 2006. Population estimates of birds in Great Britain and the United Kingdom. British Birds 99, 25-44.

⁴² Brown, A. & Grice, P. 2005. Birds in England. T. & A.D. Poyser, London.

⁴³ Petty S.J. 2007. Northern goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*. In 'The Birds of Scotland'. Eds. R.W. Forrester & I.J. Andrews. Scottish Ornithologists' Club, Aberlady.

⁴⁴ Petty, S.J. 2002. Northern goshawk *Accipiter gentilis*. In: *Migration Atlas: movements of birds in Britain & Ireland*. pp 232-234. Eds: C.V. Wernham, M.P. Toms, J.H. Marchant, J.A. Clark, G.M. Siriwardena & S.R. Baillie. T. & A.D. Poyser, London.

⁴⁵ *Cage & Aviary Birds* classified advertisements, July 2008 – February 2009: Range £500 - £1850, mean £995 (*n* = 11)

⁴⁶ Shorrocks, G. 1998. The success of DNA profiling in wildlife law enforcement. International Journal of Biosciences and the Law 1, 327-341.

⁴⁷ Also a further five counts of disturbance

Hen Harrier

6.9 Reports of deliberate persecution against hen harrier appear relatively low according to data with three reports of direct killing and one of chick theft during the strategic period, however it is a species that nests in such remote areas that persecution is likely to go unreported and data is unlikely to truly reflect the full picture. A further seven reports of disturbance were also reported. The hen harrier is currently classified as Red⁴⁸ and their decline is further emphasised within the following provided by JNCC;

Hen harriers are birds of prey that feed on other birds and small mammals, predominantly on moorland and upland habitats. The hen harrier breeds widely across Eurasia and North America, but has an unfavourable conservation status in Europe. It has suffered a historical decline in the United Kingdom and is in the process of recovery. About 800 pairs nest in the UK and Isle of Man, with the greatest proportion in Scotland.

The English hen harrier population remains perilously small, with no more than 23 nesting attempts in any one year during the period 2002-2008; compared to the estimated 232 territorial females that the English uplands could support in the absence of persecution. Hen harriers continue to decline in northern England, and south and east Scotland, areas dominated by heather moorland that is managed for driven grouse shooting. Productivity from successful nests is high, but very few nesting attempts are successful on grouse moors and there is compelling evidence that illegal persecution is the main factor behind the hen harrier's continued unfavourable status here. There were 43 territorial pairs in Wales in 2004, representing an increase of 54% since 1998. In spite of the recent population increase in Wales, the hen harrier is still a priority conservation species because of its historical population decline and its continuing unfavourable conservation status at the European level. The species is of Principal Biodiversity Importance in Wales and England⁴⁹.

The hen harrier is included in Annex I of the EU Birds Directive and is subject to special conservation measures. These measures serve to protect their habitat, and help to ensure survival and reproduction of the species in their area of distribution. It is also classified under Appendix II of the Bern Convention, which calls for the special protection of the species using legislative instruments for its conservation. The hen harrier is also included on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 which protects it from disturbance at or near the nest and means that special penalties apply for offences affecting this species. The hen harrier is listed on CITES Appendix II and Annex A of Regulation (EC) No.338/97, and trade in specimens of this species (dead, alive, parts or derivatives thereof) are regulated accordingly.

Of all birds of prey in the UK, the hen harrier is the most heavily persecuted in relation to its population size. It is one of the few species whose very existence as a breeding bird in England is threatened as a direct result of wildlife crime. Elsewhere in the UK its range and breeding success are limited by persecution. In the past few years birds have been shot, nests and their contents destroyed, nest sites lost through the inappropriate burning of heather, and nesting attempts have failed because of disturbance. It is known that hen harriers breed less successfully on moorland managed for grouse shooting than on moorland managed with conservation as the main priority. Hen harriers range over wide areas of countryside and persecution is sufficiently widespread to hold the population at a dangerously low level in England, despite the efforts of conservation organisations on areas they manage.

Red Kite

6.10 Red kites are the second most persecuted raptor (15% / 29⁵⁰) and are currently classified as Amber in terms of their conservation status⁵¹. Incident data indicates that the species are most at threat in Scotland and the decline of the red kite in this region since their reintroduction was summarised in a paper which estimated that in the absence of illegal killing its population would increase as further described.

⁴⁸ British Trust for Ornithology

⁴⁹ Section 42 of the NERC Act 2006

⁵⁰ Of which 25 were confirmed poisonings

⁵¹ British Trust for Ornithology

Red Kite Research⁵²

Overview: Illegal killing is the cause of poor population growth of red kites in North Scotland. In the absence of illegal killing the population growth would be similar to southern England.

Summary: Population growth of reintroduced red kites in north Scotland has been significantly slower than in other areas, notably the Chilterns in England. This is despite the same number of birds having been released over the same years, and there being no discernible variation in habitat or food availability.

In north Scotland, 40% of 103 red kites found dead were killed illegally, mainly by direct poisoning. This was found to be the primary factor limiting population expansion. Population modelling predicted that in the absence of illegal killing, there would have been 283-302 pairs of red kites in north Scotland by 2006 whereas in reality there were only 40 pairs. This is similar to the current population level in the Chilterns (approximately 320 pairs) and suggests that illegal poisoning can explain almost all of the difference between the two populations. This provides strong evidence that illegal poisoning is having a population level effect on red kites in north Scotland.

The paper concludes that illegal killing of red kites is the cause of poor population growth in north Scotland and the key challenge facing government is to find a way to eliminate this killing⁵³.

White Tailed Eagle

6.11 The white tailed eagle is the UK's largest raptor and classified as Red⁵⁴ within the UK, Rare in Europe and Near Threatened in global terms due to its fragile conservation status and is further echoed by JNCC;

The white tailed eagle is a long-lived, slow-reproducing raptor, compensating for a low annual offspring production by high adult survival. This makes the species most sensitive to a decrease in adult survival, compared with a decrease in juvenile survival or a temporary decrease in productivity. A reduction in productivity over many years, however, will threaten the population, as demonstrated by the critical situation in the Baltic region from the 1960s until the mid-1980s as a result of contamination with pollutants⁵⁵. Although the population is increasing, it remains small in the UK and is vulnerable to a number of threats. These include killing of adult and juvenile birds, either through deliberate targeting (shooting, poisoning) or through secondary impacts (e.g. through the misuse of some agrochemicals, and pollutant contamination such as ingested lead from bullets and shot). In past years, the species has been the target of egg collectors, and more recently, the deliberate destruction of nests.

During the strategic period sea eagles were subjected to two confirmed poisonings in Scotland and one shooting in Northern Ireland⁵⁶.

Non Priority Species

6.12 Peregrine falcons are particularly vulnerable to egg and chick theft, suffering from this activity the most of all raptors during the strategic period (67% / 12). Peregrine falcons also rank quite highly in terms of illegal trapping and shooting (only one report of confirmed poisoning), recording the third greatest amount. Almost half of these reports originated from the RSPB but were not reported by the police force the offence occurred in.

Most raptor study groups maintain long term data in regard to local raptor populations by surveying trends, range, survival and productivity. Some wildlife crime officers will make contact with their local groups to

⁵² Smart, J, Amar, A, Sim, IMW, Etheridge, B, Cameron, D, Christie, G and Wilson, JD (2010) Illegal killing slows population recovery of a re-introduced raptor of high conservation concern - The red kite. *Biological Conservation* 143 (5); 1278-1286

⁵³ Summary provided by RSPB

⁵⁴ British Trust for Ornithology

⁵⁵ EU Action Plan for the conservation of White-tailed Sea Eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*) (2002)

⁵⁶ One report of disturbance was also received

help understand the impact of the offence they are investigating. Consideration should be given to this type of information being used more effectively, to place an offence of raptor persecution in context of conservation especially at court.

Peregrine Falcon Research⁵⁷

6.13 Overview: Peregrine breeding performance in Northern England is lower on land managed for grouse shooting with human persecution the only logical explanation of this. The severity of persecution means that the grouse moor populations are not self sustaining, and are acting as sinks drawing in peregrines in the relatively productive habitats away from grouse moor habitats.

Summary: This study used data from over 1000 peregrine nesting attempts between 1980 and 2006 from seven study areas across northern England collected by Northern England Raptor Forum (NERF) fieldworkers. The percentage of grouse moor management surrounding each peregrine nest site was calculated.

The probability of producing a clutch was significantly lower on grouse moors, as was hatching success and fledging success. As a consequence of these differences, overall breeding success and productivity was lower on grouse moors, with pairs occupying territories on grouse moors producing only around half the number of young as those nesting in non-grouse moor habitats. Weather and food availability, two other variables that could affect breeding success, were also studied. However, neither of these variables could explain the difference in breeding success between grouse moor and non-grouse moor areas. Human persecution was by far the more likely cause of differences. Simple population models suggest that grouse moors are not self sustaining and instead are acting as sinks, with non-grouse moor habitat acting a source. In the absence of immigration of birds from other habitats, peregrine populations on grouse moors would decline to extinction within 50 years. The severity of persecution on grouse moors is having a population level impact⁵⁸.

⁵⁷ Amar, A *et al* (2011) Negative relationship between grouse moor management and reproduction of peregrines indicates widespread demographic impacts of illegal persecution (in prep)

⁵⁸ Summary provided by RSPB

7.0 Intelligence Requirements

7.1 CITES ~ Annex A and B Orchid Species ~ Key Findings

- Reported incidents from UK forces relate to the theft of orchids from UK sites, as the number being reported is low there are no geographical variations identified. Little more is known about the intended purpose of these thefts.

7.1.1 Reported incidents from UK forces relate to the theft of orchids from UK sites, as the number being reported is low there are no geographical variations identified. Little more is known about the intended purpose of these thefts.

Plan Owner Update

This report concentrates on the international and intra-EU trade in Annex A and Annex B orchid species given the Plan Owners are the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (RBG Kew) and Animal Health (AH), whose main responsibilities are to track CITES plant trade. Little more is known about the intended purpose of the thefts/disturbance if orchids and it is suggested that country agencies and UK plant NGOs are encouraged to submit updates on the status of orchids in the UK and any potential trade implications. A scoping project conducted by RBG Kew identified that the traders and plants are often based in or sourced from non-EU countries (e.g. China) and that the species of most interest to traders/collectors are newly described species or varieties/forms of new or recently described/rediscovered species. These species are turning up in collections and displayed at flower shows in EU member states, including the UK. Apart from the sale in live plants from illegal sources the major issue is the lack of or ineffectual checks carried out to prove the legality of parent material of newly described species entering the EU. The improvements in propagation mean that once obtained from the wild many of these newly described species can be propagated successfully but are in effect entering trade (intra-EU trade or to non-EU countries) misdeclared as artificially propagated. This is due to the fact that the parent stock was not legally acquired as defined under the ‘definition of Artificial Propagated’ in Resolution Conf. 11.11⁵⁹. This means that in a short period from naming illegal material is for sale within the EU in considerable amounts (declared as artificially propagated material) and it becomes increasingly difficult for Member States to ascertain the origin of the parent material in order to check whether it fits the definition of artificial propagation and is therefore legal.

The use of orchids in traditional medicines and food products, in particular traditional Chinese medicines (TCMs) has still to be fully examined, although dried crude orchid products were identified as one of the major plant groups in UK trade during Operation TRAM conducted in 2010. Although some orchids for TCMs are cultivated (e.g. *Gastrodia*), the collection from the wild of other orchid genera (e.g. *Dendrobium*) from countries including China and Myanmar is documented as having an adverse effect on the species.

RBG Kew and partners will continue to work to complete the picture of UK and EU orchid trade. It is hoped that initial work carried out at DICE, University of Kent, into the development of a process to collect and interpret data on illegal sales or display on the Internet will also continue. A document (SRG 53/18 – Sept 2010) was prepared by the RBG Kew for the EU’s Scientific Review Group. It addressed the need for coordinated measures to ensure trade in new species is regulated, orchid species being one of the main plant groups this document refers to. Continuation of this discussion at the EU level is necessary to ensure our EU partners are included in any enforcement and policy work to address this issue. However, the recession and cuts in personnel/funding may delay or even curtail this work.

⁵⁹ rev. CoP15 – see <http://www.cites.org/eng/res/all/11/E11-11R15.pdf>

7.2 CITES ~ Caviar ~ Key Findings

- The trading of caviar has now been downgraded from a Priority to an Intelligence Requirement and should be upheld as a positive example of how illegal trading can be monitored, tackled and reduced¹

7.2.1 The illegal trade in caviar became a UK Wildlife Crime Priority in 2009; following this the CITES Priority Delivery Group (CPDG) focused their attention on establishing the scale and extent of criminality. The focus was an intelligence led approach which undertook enforcement and looked at key prevention options.

7.2.2 Following this, it was concluded that the illegal trade in caviar in the UK is limited and less likely to occur in future. Therefore caviar as a priority was downgraded to an intelligence requirement and this will continue to be monitored by the NWCUC.

7.3 CITES ~ Ramin ~ Key Findings

- Little is currently known about the scope or the extent of an illegal market in ramin in the UK

7.3.1 Ramin is currently listed on Appendix II of CITES. During the strategic period there has been a distinct lack of reported information from UK police forces regarding the sale of ramin products which may indicate a training need rather than the absence of criminality. Furthermore, previous evaluation of compliance in the industry⁶⁰ has indicated non awareness of CITES legislation was common.

7.3.2 Illegal Logging

The issue of illegal logging is becoming more prevalent; as the UK recently featured as the second greatest importer of illegal timber logging in the EU by a study conducted by WWF in 2010⁶¹. Illegal logging is a pervasive problem of major international concern, as it leads to deforestation, one of the main causes for climate change. The report further concluded that international markets are often a form of organised crime. Like other criminal activities it takes place covertly and it is problematic to calculate the quantity of wood of illegal origin in international trade with exact certainty.

7.4 European Eel (illegal taking of, and trade in) ~ Key Findings

- The Environment Agency (EA) are currently tackling illegal eel and elver fishing and have a much greater involvement in its enforcement in England and Wales where criminality predominantly occurs.

7.4.1 The European eel is a Priority Species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and also appears on CITES Appendix II and is on the IUCN Red List as Critically Endangered.

7.5 Finch Trapping ~ Key Findings

- A market for trading in wild taken finches still exists (*albeit on a small scale*) and this is not confined to certain parts of the UK

7.5.1 Reported incidents of finch trapping remained relatively low and have decreased (slightly) during the strategic period⁶². Most incidents become known to the police by way of the RSPCA or SSPCA or when

⁶⁰ Ramin scoping exercise Scotland 2007

⁶¹ Illegal timber will be regulated through the Forest Law Enforcement Governance Trade (FLEGT) and the new EU Timber Regulation that will come into place in 2013

⁶² Year on year

police assistance is required during a warrant. The submission of incident data to the NWCUC from either organisation may demonstrate that incidents are more common.

7.6 Illegal Taking of Wild Birds Eggs (Operation Easter) ~ Key Findings

- Anecdotal information suggests that this area of criminality is not as popular as it once was and to some extent this is further substantiated by a decline in reported incidents. This situation will need to be continually monitored to fully assess this, therefore should retain its status as a UK Intelligence Requirement

7.6.1 The illegal taking of wild bird eggs remains a relatively low volume incident type accounting for around >1% (32) of all reported incidents, of which eight refer to the taking of raptor eggs (discussed within the raptor persecution section). Reported incidents have declined during the strategic period and this follows a general trend that egg collecting is lessening which could be due to a number of high profile convictions that have occurred over the last two years. Although most incidents are reported in the Eastern region, activity occurred across all regions during the strategic period⁶³.

8.0 Non Priority Areas ~ Environmental Damage, Destruction and Disturbance ~ Key Findings

- The habitats of birds are at the greatest threat, over half of all incidents refer to the disturbance or destruction of their nests, with developmental work being the primary cause
- Furthermore, damage to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) accounts for almost one fifth of reports. Qualifying features for such areas may be due to the protected birds that inhabit those sites
- Anti social behaviour such as off roading, camping, burning and fly tipping are increasing and are damaging SSSI's. It is assessed the most adequate response should be provided at a local / force level where the need is dictated

8.1 This category refers to the damage, destruction or disturbance of the environment that supports wildlife but does not refer to one of the priority species⁶⁴. During the strategic period these types of incidents accounted for 13% (1195) of all reported wildlife crime and are the third greatest reported incident type after hare coursing and poaching other. This type of behaviour is not necessarily becoming more prevalent, instead there is an improved awareness from both the police and the public. The category is fairly broad however the following issues are most prominent;

- *Nest disturbance and destruction (43% / 515)*

The number of incidents reported during the strategic period has remained buoyant. Developmental work and tree felling are identified as key causes of nest destruction and should be addressed at a national level as it appears to affect all parts of the UK.

- *Damage occurring within SSSI's (17% / 198)*

Anti social behaviour such as camping, burning and rubbish tipping accounts for much of this type of damage within protected areas.

- *Off roading (14% / 164)*

Reported to be primarily a problem within the South West and Wales region, although is suspected to be far more widespread. The use of off road and quad bikes are also apparent within SSSI's. Intelligence on this subject is limited and is unlikely to be linked to any organised or level two⁶⁵ criminality. The most effective response to these anti social issues needs to be at a local or force level where intervention is required.

⁶³ Excepting Northern Ireland

⁶⁴ Although on average this type of activity accounts for 35% of incidents involving the priority species ~ Bats (55%), badgers (39%), FWPM (20%), raptors (24%), not applicable for CITES, deer, hare or fish

⁶⁵ Refers to cross border issues affecting one than one police force area or regional crime activity

Potential Threats ~ Activity Days

An increase in outdoor pursuits, such as 4x4 off roading, quad bikes and military style exercise training days could be taking place in protected areas and intelligence has been received to that effect. Additionally, 14% (164) of damage is due to off roading, with some happening within SSSI's. Undoubtedly reputable organisations will seek the necessary permission prior to embarking on such activity, however there is always the threat that this may not be happening. Consideration needs to be given to what adverse effect this could be having on inhabiting species with those areas.

Geographical Distribution of all Incident Types

8.2 The South West (53% / 344) region and Wales (21% / 246) account for the greatest volume of all incidents and appears to indicate disproportionality where damage is occurring. Though it is likely that this is due to better recording procedures in those regional areas, Gloucestershire alone accounts for 15% (181) of all reported incidents nationally.

European Protected Species

8.3 Almost one in every ten incidents reported concerns a European protected species and indicates that great crested newts are most at threat (57% / 59). The causes for their habitat loss are wide ranging however development work is most culpable and is not a problem specific to one region.

Landmark Conviction

8.4 In July 2010, Aardvark TMC Ltd was fined £10,000 after pleading guilty to an offence under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 section 19(3) and (5) at Ayr Sheriff Court. The opencast mining company admitted failing to notify Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) of work they were carrying out on a SSSI. This conviction was the first time a Scottish court has imposed a fine under legislation to protect such sites.

Illegal Introduction of Non Native Species

The reporting of the presence, introduction or spread of non native species may only provide a snapshot of the problem given a lack of awareness⁶⁶.

Emerging Threat ~ Japanese Knotweed

8.5 During the strategic period, the spread of and incorrect disposal of Japanese knotweed (JKW) is the greatest threat within this category. According to the reported data incidents are being committed by developmental work as much as by residential work. However, a lack of understanding about whose responsibility it is to investigate these types of offences may also contribute to underreporting to the police. It is evident from the incidents reported to the NWCU that this is sometimes the situation. It is also apparent in regard to the legislation as some reports simply refer to the existence of JKW, though it is not an offence if it is growing in your garden or on your land and there is no specific duty either to notify anyone of its presence or to control it. The most effective way to address these issues would be through awareness raising, though it is not clear at this time who would be most appropriate to progress this or whether it is warranted on this data alone.

Other Non Priority Areas⁶⁷

9.0 The illegal trapping, snaring, shooting of animals⁶⁸ were also high volume contributors during the strategic period though all categories have decreased which is probably attributable to improved recording practices. Birds (also inclusive of pest species) are most affected by these offence types and geographical variations are also apparent as explained below;

⁶⁶ Identification sheets on non-native species available at the GB Non-Native Species Secretariat (<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/nonnativespecies/home/index.cfm>)

⁶⁷ See appendix four for all 'Other' incidents

⁶⁸ None of which are one of the priority species

Shooting

9.1 The illegal shooting (eg: not having landowner's permission or not using the correct shot type) currently accounts for 9% (831) of all reported incidents. Though the total number being reported has decreased by 13% (59) during the strategic period⁶⁹, every ACPO and ACPOS region either reported declines or the number reported remained stable, except the South West region⁷⁰ (97% / 29) and Scotland (38% / 17) where shooting increased. The great increase in the SW region was due to sharp increases identified in Wiltshire and Gloucestershire. Birds are the biggest victim of shooting with almost six out of ten (56% / 465) incidents referring to one of its species; pest species (like pigeons and gulls) were the most frequent. Which raises the issue that some of these reports may be legal as the complainant is unaware of the licence status of the shooter.

Trapping and Snaring

9.2 The reporting of incidents involving traps and snares accounted for 3% (317) of all reported incidents, and the number of reports has also fallen during the strategic period by 15% (25). Almost one quarter of incidents (24% / 75) were in reference to birds, though corvids accounted for over half of the species type (53% / 40). These offence types occur throughout the UK, however are most prevalent in Scotland where 37% (118)⁷¹ of incidents originated and as such should be a priority of focus within that region.

Legislation ~ Update to the Spring Trap approval in Scotland

The Scottish Government is currently looking to update spring traps approvals. A new Order will be made in 2011 with no change likely before Easter, and it is possible that this may not be undertaken until the summer. Scottish Government will alert PAW Scotland partners of the Order when it is made.

During the strategic period, 5% (16) of offences within this category were in relation to legal traps that had been tampered with by members of the public who may not be aware of legal control management measures in use.

Fox Hunting

9.3 As with the two categories described above, fox hunting has remained consistent throughout the strategic period, currently accounting for 4% (393) of all reported incidents. The inclusion of League against Cruel Sports data in year two may indicate that this problem is underreported as one in ten reports originates from their organisation⁷². Fox hunting is predominantly a problem in the South West region as almost one third (33% / 131) of reports originate there and should be a priority of focus in that regional area. An emerging problem may also be present in the North West region where reports have increased by 52% (13) during the strategic period. Some incidents are in relation to traditional fox hunting but there is also an emergence of a more specific threat of large groups of young males hunting foxes with dogs, such as pit bulls often at night.

⁶⁹ This may be due to better recording practices

⁷⁰ Partly attributable to 1000% (10) increase in Wiltshire and 171 % (12) increase in Gloucestershire during this period

⁷¹ All other ACPO and ACPOS regions reported 30 incidents or less during the same period

⁷² Where not reported by the police force the incident occurred in

Appendix One ~ PESTELO⁷³ Issues

Economic ~ Long Term Impact of Recession

A number of organisations have expressed concern at the budget cuts and its impact as described below;

- All environmental regulators facing severe budget cuts. Natural England's budget expected to be cut by 30-35%.
- The UKBA budget over the next four years could have a knock-on effect in their enforcement capacity. It is possible that the number of detections/seizures could be affected and also the ability to engage fully in meeting the priority objectives.
- Cuts in Animal Health and Defra is likely to impact upon non-departmental bodies such as RBG Kew and may also affect capacity building which may reduce ability to provide previous levels of training to funds available for attending meetings.
- There is an increased risk of police wildlife crime coordinator posts being made redundant, as has already happened in Cheshire.

Legislation ~ Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Bill

- Stage 2 (where amendments can be put forward to Bill and voted on by Committee) will take place ~ December 2010 and January 2011
- Stage 3 (where amendments can be put forward to Bill and voted by Chamber, and where Parliament pass the Bill) will take place in March 2011
- Earliest date for legislation to come into force should take place from May 2011 onwards

Legislative ~ Civil Sanctions

Natural England expecting to publicly consult on using civil sanctions in Jan 2011; Environment Agency consultation complete and sanctions will be used from 4 Jan 2011. Full list of all proposed new legislation is at <http://www.bis.gov.uk/policies/better-regulation> - see 'Government's forward regulatory programme'. Note the Freedom (Great Repeal) Bill in particular - <http://www.number10.gov.uk/queens-speech/2010/05/queens-speech-freedom-great-repeal-bill-50647>.

Badger Persecution

Environmental ~ Proposed Badger Cull ~ England and Wales

Since the halt of the badger cull proposal for Wales (after The Badger Trust won a judicial review of the proposed cull) the coalition government are still looking at ways of reducing Bovine TB and possibly amending the badger cull order. The final plan is expected to be announced in March 2011, with the first culls possibly the same year.⁷⁴ Ministers are now proposing that farmers could be licensed in England to shoot badgers on their land as this would be more cost-effective than having a central organisation co-ordinate it⁷⁵.

Emerging Threat

Incident data has indicated an increase in sett disturbance in the last twelve months particularly within the South West region where incidents have increased by 52% (15) compared to the previous year. Devon and Cornwall was identified as a hotspot area for Bovine TB earlier in the year and there is concern that political acceptance of this method may see farmers managing the problem themselves without obtaining a licence⁷⁶.

⁷³ Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legislative and Organisational issues

⁷⁴ <http://www.bbc.co.uk>

⁷⁵ The consultation on the proposed badger control policy closed on 8 December and responses are being considered, ministers are expected to take a decision on the way forward soon: Defra

⁷⁶ A research paper published recently found that farmers will rationalize this activity by claiming it is necessary (to protect their assets) but they will also deny the necessity of the law, especially when the defence is given in context of the economic impact.

Bat Persecution

Political ~ Balancing Heritage and Conservation Issues

Bat persecution occurring at churches is reported, but not on a great scale (3% / 8) during the current strategic period. Bats and church buildings have a long association and it is estimated that many of the 16,000 parish churches in England alone are used by bats to a greater or lesser degree. The problems caused by bats in churches are not widespread, but where they exist they are deemed serious; causing damage to the fabric which is considered expensive to be cleaned. The damage also caused to historic artefacts is incalculable in monetary terms. The Church Buildings Council is currently working closely with Natural England and Defra to find ways of mitigating the burden to churches within the law, and is currently conducting a pilot project in Norfolk to explore ways of encouraging the bats to find alternative accommodation with the use of bat boxes outside on the eaves.

Environmental ~ Energy Efficiency

The drive to reduce energy and the need for everyone to be more environmentally aware may result in an increase in measures such as loft insulation within people's homes. The government website links to an energy saving website⁷⁷ which advises homeowners to tackle this work themselves. The appeal of tax breaks, grants and considerable fuel savings may entice homeowners to consider this. While the energy saving website endorses DIY loft insulation, it fails to outline legislation in the event of the discovery of bats.

Economic ~ Planning Applications

The economic downturn has resulted in reduced numbers of large-scale planning applications and an increase in smaller developments trying to get through the planning system with minimal or no environmental work to reduce costs. Significant cuts in public spending have also resulted in a substantial decrease in resources for SNCOs limiting the level of support available for the determination of planning applications. This has led to an increase in reports from the Association of Local Government Ecologists (ALGE) of malpractice and offences committed by both developers and local planning authorities.

Social ~ Urban Exploration

A relatively new trend known as 'urban exploration' or 'infiltration' (involving visiting sites of uninhabited space) has grown in popularity largely due to social networking on the Internet. Ventures into abandoned structures are perhaps the most common example of urban exploration. Members of such sites will post images of sites for other users to explore and some intelligence indicates that members have visited sites where bats were present. The initial philosophy of urban exploration was that you visit the site, take photos etc, but leave it as you found it. Reported incidents to the NWCUC have not identified this to be of great concern; furthermore it is difficult to assess the actual disturbance this would cause to bats. However due to a rise in media attention of urban exploration there are concerns that its popularity will increase and extend to those who may not necessarily be concerned with not disturbing anything inhabiting such structures.

Social ~ Prefabricated Buildings

A report recently featured in Bat News (BCT) outlined the reality of bat roosting in prefabricated buildings where previously this was thought not possible due to their flat roofs. It was raised that surveys recommended as standard on other types of buildings may be overlooked on these types of buildings as not suitable for bats. Greater awareness is needed to publicise the potential of prefabricated buildings supporting bats.

Technological ~ Accommodating Wildlife

A new bat house has been developed and built at the London wetland centre in Barnes, and is hoped it will act as a prototype for architects and developers to accommodate wildlife within new buildings and developments in a more innovative and artistic way as well as reducing the carbon footprint of new builds. The bat house is built from Hemcrete - a more sustainable alternative to concrete made from hemp and lime

⁷⁷ www.direct.gov.uk contains a link through to www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

- which is breathable and should be ideal for the bats to roost in. It locks up CO₂, partly because of its organic basis, which is helpful in the fight against climate change⁷⁸.

Environmental ~ Habitat Preferences in Urban Areas

Research has found that bat activity is significantly higher in urban areas within woodland and park areas. In urban areas, where suitable habitat is scarce and bat activity favours garden, park and woodland, especially those of relatively large patch size, there may be a case for ensuring adequate habitats networks in order to preserve the favourable status of bats. These findings, building on previous studies⁷⁹ could have significance in terms of policy and planning for urban areas. In the UK, local authorities that wish to meet their obligations under European legislation could more effectively consider the urban landscape on a larger scale – rather than a series of development plots⁸⁰.

Legislative ~ Implications of Licensing Refusals

Scottish Natural Heritage report a number of ecological consultants has raised concerns over the interpretation of what can or cannot be licensed as per the Habitats Directive especially when dealing with European Protected Species, particularly bats. The result is that applicants are not receiving licences to carry out works that could otherwise constitute an offence, even if the likely conservation impact on bats is negligible (or even potentially positive), and the view of the consultants is that this is likely to result in an increase in the number of offences being committed in respect of bats and their roosts. There is also the concern that this could apply to species other than bats.

CITES ~ Ivory

Ethical Alternative to Ivory

There has been an increase in growth in the industry of mammoth excavation in Russia. Every year, between mid June and mid September, the Siberian Tundra melts and reveals an ever increasing amount of mammoth remains that are being pushed to the surface by global warming. It is estimated that there are 150 million carcasses underneath the ice in this area, and their tusks are seen as an ethical alternative to elephant ivory. Russia is currently exporting 60 tonnes of mammoth ivory direct to China every year to feed the high ivory demand in this country. Mammoth ivory commands a much higher price than elephant ivory, fetching up to \$350 per kilogram in Russia whilst elephant ivory fetches about \$50 a kilo in small African towns⁸¹, it is thought that this will actually help to reduce demand for elephant ivory⁸².

Alternatively, it may drive up demand if mammoth or legally sourced ivory is not readily available, in which elephant ivory that has been illegally accumulated may be used to fuel the demand. Other problems also include elephant ivory being artificially coloured to resemble mammoth ivory (which already occurs on a small scale) to bypass CITES certification as well as to command the higher price of mammoth ivory. Potentially, the importation of mammoth ivory⁸³ will increase and may coincide with the importation of counterfeit mammoth ivory (to exploit its value). India is currently the only country that has banned mammoth ivory, because of fears it can be used as cover for products made from endangered Indian elephants⁸⁴.

Social ~ European Tourists Drive up Demand

The illegal elephant ivory trade in Ethiopia is still relatively prolific despite a heavy decline following a major government drive to eradicate trading which took place in 2005⁸⁵. While many smaller shops have ceased selling ivory at least 2000 pieces have been found on display in souvenir stores, furthermore

⁷⁸ http://www.greenbuildingpress.co.uk/article.php?article_id=294

⁷⁹ Gaisler *et al.*, 1998; Gehrt and Chelsvig, 2004

⁸⁰ The influence of urban habitats on bat activity, C. Laing MSc Thesis

⁸¹ <http://www.cbc.ca>

⁸² This may occur if elephant ivory is reduced in price by this legal alternative and poachers no longer see it a worthwhile risk poaching elephants with such little return

⁸³ Currently there are none

⁸⁴ <http://www.guardian.co.uk>

⁸⁵ TRAFFIC Bulletin Volume 22; No. 3 - March 2010

European visitors and growing number of Chinese workers in the country continue to buy ivory items that are openly displayed, stimulating the market for ivory. The trade in smaller items such as jewellery and small figurines is popular, likely due to being easier to smuggle on your person. Since publication of this bulletin a number of successful raids resulted in the seizure of 191kg of ivory and a number of arrests. However what it does indicate is that the tourist trade of ivory still exists, with Europeans being cited as responsible for some of this.

CITES - Traditional Medicines

Identified Issues ~ Prevalence of Hunting for Pangolin

A report produced by TRAFFIC⁸⁶ examined the pangolin trade in SE Asia and suggests that pangolins are being hunted more than was previously thought. Its meat is demanded in China and its scales are used in traditional medicine. The report showed that the trade in pangolins is well established in the region and is well connected to the international trade network. Those involved in this area of criminality usually hunt to supplement their primary income and it was found that a large number of people are willing to do this. Additionally, pangolins are not hunted for personal consumption, as is similar with rhino and tigers. The detection of such trade requires a high level of specialist enforcement which is often lacking; meaning trade is able to grow unmonitored. The report presents the threat to pangolins within this area and suggests trade of this species may be greater than anticipated.

Economical ~ Price Increase

According to the China Association of Traditional Chinese Medicine, 84% of Chinese traditional medicines have seen price increases as high as 700% in 2010 and more than a quarter of the herbs used in Chinese medicine have increased in price by between 50% and 100% with a small group having 300% increases. Market analysts have suggested that a supply-side shortage could be the root of the problem, whilst others blame bad weather and an increase in growing consumer demand for traditional medicines. It has also been linked to the recent surge in inflation in China, which rose by 4.4% in October 2010. In the first three quarters of 2010, exports of traditional Chinese medicines have increased by 20.5% on a year by year basis.

Threat

As prices continue to rise, it's possible that more individuals may turn to this lucrative market to exploit the increased prices of traditional medicines. If traditional medicines have increased significantly in price in China then this may impact upon the market within the UK. UK stockists of traditional medicines may try to import cheaper products from companies who may not comply with CITES certification or who's products may have been gained illegally as a cheaper alternative.

Social ~ Possible Increase in Demand for Seahorses

The ornamental aquarium trade accounts for hundreds of thousands of seahorses every year; however there seems to be an increase in the number of captive bred being exported from Hawaii, Vietnam, Sri Lanka and Australia globally. There is currently only one specialist distributor of captive breeds in the UK; however this one distributor imports approximately 1,000-1,200 seahorses every year to supply demand. Seahorses seem to be growing in popularity as the aquatic trade has increased in popularity due to technological advancements in keeping marine species in captivity. There are also more businesses that are trading in marine species in the Asian and Australian continents. Intelligence suggests that international suppliers of live seahorses are very keen to export to the UK to supply the increasing demand and as such may not always comply with import conditions.

Threat

It is possible that as the ornamental trade continues to grow in popularity so will the importation of seahorses especially as international businesses are targeting the UK market. Seahorses in the UK can sell on average between £40 and £150 so is a lucrative market to exploit and competition is increasing outside of the UK. Moreover, the UK species of seahorse may become targeted for the UK aquatic trade as this is a financially more viable option then importing seahorses from outside the EU.

⁸⁶ A preliminary assessment of Sunda pangolin trade in Sabaha, 2010

Technological ~ Alternative Ingredients for Traditional Medicines

Chinese chemists have joined up with animal rights activists in a conservation project designed to search for substitutes for bear bile used in traditional medicines. After the success of developing artificial musk, a substance normally gained from the glands of a male musk deer, it is believed that the same could be prepared for bear bile to assist in the conservation of bears. In conjunction with this, the Chinese government have agreed not to renew any more licenses for bear farming. Another highlight of the project is that substituted products generally cost considerably less than their original counterparts and this may reduce the incentive to illegally gain these items. If this turns out to be a success then it is possible for further traditional medicine ingredients to have substitutes developed to aid the conservation of other endangered animals and reduce the illegal motivation involved in these products.

Legislation ~ Licensing of Traditional Medicines

The Traditional Herbal Medicinal Products Directive, 2004/24/EC, was established to provide a regulatory approval process for herbal medicines in the EU, and came into force on 30 April 2004. Those products marketed before this legislation came into force can continue to market their product until 30 April 2011, under the transitional measures defined in the Traditional Herbal Medicinal Products Directive. From 1 May 2011 new licensing rules under the EU Directive will aim to protect consumers from any damaging side effects that may arise from taking unsuitable medicines or herbs. The Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency state that “what regulation does it to ensure products meet assured standards.” The Directive aims to simplify the procedure to help all companies with placing traditional herbal medicinal products on the market. If a herbal medicinal product is not registered or authorised by 1 May 2011, the product may not be on the EU market. However, herbal products may be classified and placed on the market as food provided that they do not fit with the definition of medicinal products and that they comply with the applicable food law⁸⁷. It is unknown what impact that what may have on the traditional medicine market, though some suspect this may lead many to go out of business⁸⁸.

CITES

Environmental ~ Global Wildlife Enforcement Group

Interpol have adopted a resolution on November 8th 2010 unanimously pledging support to back the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species and to fight environmental crime. This is after 650 delegates from 141 countries attending Interpol’s General Assembly in Doha, Qatar all voted in favour of a resolution encouraging greater global policing efforts to stem environmental crimes. The resolution recommends the creation of an “Environmental Crime Committee” and urges member countries and partner organisations to make financial contributions or provide specialised personnel for the committee. The resolution also emphasises the need for a global response to try and combat the effect environmental crime has on the global economy and security. The new wildlife enforcement group, the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC) was introduced at the Global Tiger Summit in St. Petersburg. This group hopes to bring a co-ordinated approach to environmental crime and targets organised criminal networks as well as aiming to increase detection and the imposition of penalties to match the crimes.

Social ~ Prevalence of the Trading of Bushmeat across Europe

The findings of a study examining the illegal trade of bushmeat estimates that around 270 tonnes could be passing through Charles de Gaulle airport, Paris every year. The research highlighted how much bushmeat can be smuggled into any European city when during a 17 day period in 2008; 134 people were searched of which nine had bushmeat and 83 had livestock or fish. Eleven different species were found including monkeys, large rats, pangolins and almost 40% were listed on CITES⁸⁹. It was assessed that meat was for both personal consumption and part of a lucrative organised trade, for example a four kg monkey will sell for 100 Euros in Europe compared with just five Euros in Cameroon. Though this is the first study of its

⁸⁷ <http://europa.eu/rapid/showInformation.do?pageName=middayExpress>

⁸⁸ www.bbc.co.uk

⁸⁹ Chaber, A.L. (2008) An analysis of the African bushmeat trade in France.

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

kind and was conducted over a small time period, it is suspected that a real market exists for the following reasons;

- The detection and seizures of these products are not a priority
- Penalties for importing illegal meat are low and rarely imposed
- The rewards for transporting bushmeat are potentially high

The Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) state that if the current hunting levels persist many species will be endangered in less than fifty years. However, they insist that the response needs to ensure that local people are empowered and that mechanisms are created for community management of bushmeat as it provides up to 80% of protein and fat essential in rural diets. Therefore a blanket ban in hunting would drive the whole issue underground. CIFOR also cite European consumers as being partly responsible for the bushmeat crisis. Despite this, the scale and extent of this market is not fully known and the NWCU does not hold any information concerning this trade within the UK. Two separate seizures have occurred in Switzerland during the last few months where carcasses of crocodiles and pangolins for bushmeat were hidden in luggage on flights from Cameroon. A similar was study was conducted in 2007 at Heathrow airport which found that only a small number of CITES listed species were being illegally imported into the UK. It also found that although the wild meat market in the UK was difficult to determine, the ability to monitor this more effectively would enable local authorities to identify and detect action⁹⁰.

Legislative ~ Plant Listings

The new CITES listings for plants post CoP15 (March 2010), in particular those for Aniba and Bulnesia species, mean new products fall under regulation. The associated regulated products are imported and re-exported from the UK so the new listings are relevant to UK enforcement. As with many new listings there is a teething stage whereby UK enforcement may find the annotations against these listings difficult to interpret and further training may be needed by UK enforcement to implement them. Also a whole new set of traders will require education on CITES to ensure no mistakes are made.

Poaching and Hare Coursing

Economical ~ Police Budget Cuts

Most of the drive to deal with poaching, hare coursing and rural crime is from the Neighbourhood Policing Teams as a response to demands by the public in those communities. This includes the use of PCSO's on patrols and linking with Farmwatch. There are concerns about future financial cuts and the impact on Community Policing and whether the current efforts can be sustained. Neighbourhood Management have a different set of priorities that do not always include hare coursing or poaching and it is believed that they are under more pressure to tackle more 'urban' problems such as criminal damage or anti social behaviour.

Raptor Persecution

Environmental ~ Pesticide Recovery Scheme

Project SOE (Security in the Operational Environment) is an initiative which focuses on security issues within the agricultural environment. It has been developed as a result of initial research into the agricultural sector regarding security concerns. The project has been developed by a number of Government agencies with significant input from key farming associations such as the National Farmers Union, Royal Agricultural Society for England, BASIS⁹¹ and the National Gamekeepers Organisation. Project SOE is launching a Biocides and Pesticides Recovery Scheme from 3rd January to 14th March 2011. The scheme will make it possible to dispose of any out of date or revoked biocides and pesticides, for a one off cost (£20) and applies to England, Wales and Scotland.

⁹⁰ Defra report: Imported bushmeat; species identification using DNA typing (2007)

⁹¹ BASIS is an independent organisation set up at the suggestion of the UK Government in 1978 to establish and assess standards in the pesticide industry relating to storage, transport and competence of staff

CITES Ramin

SEARS⁹² - Joint Investigations Team (Scotland)

The July SEARS Project Board meeting accepted a recommendation from the Joint Investigations Team Working Group not to proceed with a formally constituted investigations team but instead proceed as follows -

Three of the four partner organisations (SNH, FCS and RPID – not SEPA⁹³) identified a common training need in relation to their enforcement roles and would develop and deliver training in a modular fashion, available across the SEARS partnership, with a common module covering;

- Recognising and gathering evidence
- Taking witness statements
- Interviewing skills
- Reporting of cases to Procurator Fiscal
- Training for witnesses at Court

To which organisations would add modules specific to their regulatory function/ legislation. The first manifestation of this approach is that Forest Commission Scotland (FCS) have offered a course on tackling illegal felling operations with two modules; the first on timber measurement and the second module covering the law and court procedures.

Legislation ~ Government U~Turn on Illegal Logging

In autumn 2010, the new partnership government made a pledge to introduce measures to make the import or possession of illegal timber a criminal offence. According to the European Commission illegal logging accounts for around 19% of the timber products used in the EU pulp and paper sector. The British Association of Reinforcement (BAR) outline that the UK is the third greatest importer of timber after China and Japan. Currently UK legislation requires that its departments and agencies 'actively seek' and source legal and sustainable timber but currently the lack of guidelines mean that policy is poorly implemented. However in December 2010, the pledge was reversed. In correspondence from a government minister to the Green MP Caroline Lucas, the government makes clear it will not honour the pledge to make it a criminal offence to possess, or bring into the country, illegal timber. Jim Paice, minister for agriculture and food, has now told Lucas the government will not move beyond proposed EU legislation on timber import and "will not be pursuing further UK legislative action at this stage." That means any move to make possession of illegal timber a criminal offence has been effectively ruled out. He was also quoted as saying;

"We should recognise that much illegal timber comes into the country through negligence rather than deliberate criminal activity, and we anticipate that this negligence will be stamped out by the regulation. In these difficult financial times, we need to focus on the principles of better regulation. There is little to be gained by initiating additional (and duplicative) UK legislation in this area and we must be wary of creating a disadvantage in our timber's trade's efforts to act as world leaders in the procurement of legal timber".

Social ~ Slowdown in the Rate of Deforestation

Rates of illegal logging are often difficult to determine. An in-depth Chatham House report issued in July 2010 states that *'illegal logging and related trade have been extensive and had a considerable impact. Illegal logging is estimated to have fallen by between 50 and 75% during the last decade in Cameroon, the Brazilian Amazon and Indonesia, while imports of illegally sourced wood to the seven consumer and processing countries studied are down 30% from their peak in 2004'*. These changes are large given the state of illegal logging in the past prior to improved implementation in country and national and international legislation to regulate illegal trade. The report further states that *'Although illegal logging has declined, it remains a major problem and where progress has been made additional gains are likely to become increasingly hard to achieve. In seeking to bring illegal logging and associated trade to a complete end, it is important that policy-makers and other stakeholders take note of the lessons from the past and the changing nature of the problem'*.

⁹² Scotland's Environment and Rural Services (SEARS) is a partnership between eight public bodies aiming to improve the experience among land managers by working together to provide an efficient and effective service

⁹³ Scottish Natural Heritage, Forestry Commission Scotland, Rural Payments Inspectorate Directorate, Scottish Environment Protection Agency

European Eel

On December 6 the temporary on the import and export ban on European eels was extended. The Committee on Trade in Wild Flora and Fauna, assisting the Commission in implementing the CITES, concluded to extend the ban of export and import of European eels following the unanimous recommendation from its scientific advisory body, the Scientific Review Group. This ban will stay in place until the Scientific Review Group reassesses the situation at the end of 2011. However, both the Chair of the Scientific Review Group and the representative of DG Mare pointed out that the eel stock is very unlikely to recover until then. The meeting also discussed the option of upgrading the European eel on the CITES annexes, from annex B to annex A, which would give increased protection. No decision was taken, but it will continue to be discussed with both fisheries and CITES administrations during 2011.

Non Priority Areas

Legislation ~ Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Bill

The WANE Bill includes a proposal to give Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) the option of serving a 'restoration notice' on those it considers responsible for unconsented or otherwise intentional or reckless damage to the protected natural features of a SSSI. This will provide an intermediate option between SNH seeking voluntary restoration and a court imposing a restoration order as a form of sentence on a person found guilty of a relevant offence. The Forest Commission Scotland, Rural Payments and Inspections Directorate, Scottish Environmental Protection Agency and local authorities already have similar notice options under other legislation. As currently worded in the Bill, compliance with a restoration notice would remove the risk of prosecution. Failure to comply with a restoration notice would be an offence and leave the responsible person at risk of prosecution for the original offence.

Appendix Two ~ Breakdown of ACPO Regions ~England and Wales

Region 1 ~ North West

Cheshire
Cumbria
Greater Manchester
Lancashire
Merseyside

Region 7 ~ Wales/ Cymru

Dyfed Powys
Gwent
North Wales
South Wales

Region 3 Midlands

Staffordshire
Warwickshire
West Mercia
West Midlands

Region 6 ~ South West

Avon and Somerset
Devon & Cornwall
Dorset
Gloucestershire
Wiltshire

Region 2 ~ North East

Cleveland
Durham
Humberside
Northumbria
North Yorkshire
South Yorkshire

Region 4 ~ Eastern

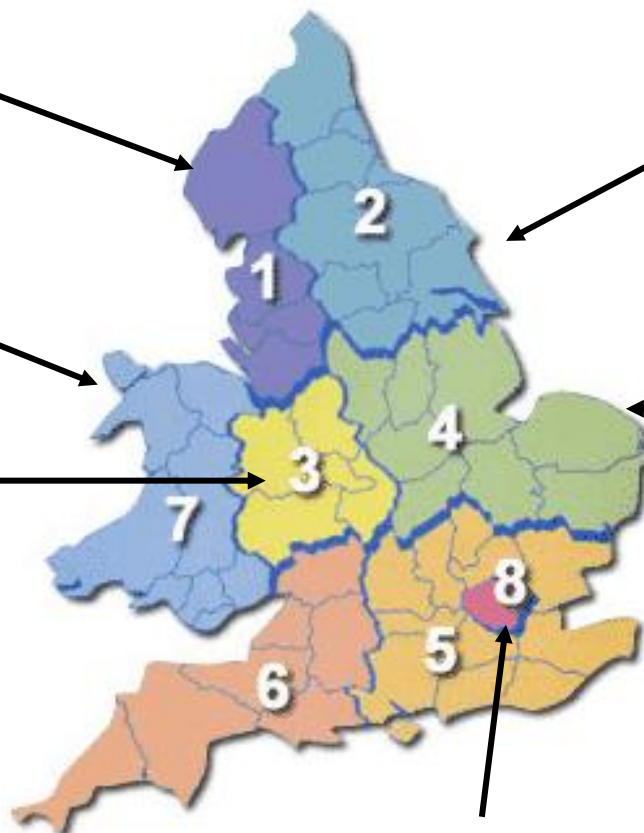
Cambridgeshire
Derbyshire
Leicestershire
Lincolnshire
Norfolk
Northamptonshire
Nottinghamshire
Suffolk

Region 5 ~ South East

Bedfordshire
Essex
Hampshire
Hertfordshire
Kent
Surrey
Sussex
Thames Valley

Region 8 ~ London

Metropolitan
City of London



NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Appendix Three ~ All reported incidents by Category and ACPO & ACPOS region (September 2008 ~ August 2010)

Category of Incident	Agency Data	PSNI	Region 1 North West	Region 2 - North East	Region 3 Midlands	Region 4 - Eastern	Region 4 - Eastern	Region 5 - South East	Region 6 - South West	Region 6 - South West	Region 7 Wales	Region 8 - London	Scotland Region	Total
Badger Persecution	125	68	99	72	31	83		75	93		80	10	117	853
Bat Persecution	88	3	10	6	16	27		15	30		72	2	25	294
CITES Caviar			1											1
CITES Ivory												2	2	4
CITES Other	1	5	2	2	2	8		9	2		15	9	7	62
CITES Tortoises	1		5	2		2		6			5	1	2	24
CITES Traditional Medicines								2				10	3	15
Finch Trapping	11	2		1	2	1		2	1		10	8	3	41
Fox Hunting	43	10	63	37	17	36	1	22	130	14	41	2	8	424
Freshwater Pearl Mussels													20	20
Habitat Destruction	16	9	33	33	26	28	2	21	244	17	200	5	46	680
Hare Coursing	5	6	86	346	12	985		396	155		3	1	247	2242
Nest Destruction/Disturbance	20	60	50	24	19	80		51	83		46	22	60	515
Non Native Species			3	2		4			2		10	1	19	41
Poaching - Deer		19	92	129	13	101		61	81		24	2	245	767
Poaching - Fish		10	61	43	8	61		44	37		34	20	166	484
Poaching - Other	2	9	244	753	3	86		46	117		64	4	73	1401
Poisoning - Baits	4	7	2	4	4	11		2	6		4	3	20	67
Poisoning - Non Raptors		23	1	2	1	1		8	3		1	2	18	60
Poisoning - Raptors	2	8		2	3	7		1	1		10		30	64
Raptor Persecution	62	14	27	13	8	25		9	13		31	2	58	262
Shooting	15	30	106	140	37	154		48	89		47	58	107	831
Traps/Snares	18	21	27	30	9	28		17	13		24	12	118	317
Wild Bird Egg/Chick Theft	7		6	4	4	13			2		2	4	7	49
Total	420	304	918	1645	215	1741	3	835	1102	31	723	180	1401	9518

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Appendix Four ~ All 'Other' incidents by Sub Category and ACPO & ACPOS region (September 2008 ~ August 2010)

Sub Category of Incident	Agency Data	PSNI	Region 2 - North East	Region 2 - North East	Region 3 - Midlands	Region 4 - Eastern	Region 5 - South East	Region 6 - South West	Region 7 - Wales	Region 8 - London	Scotland Region	Grand Total
Badger Baiting			1			1						2
Beaver Related											5	5
Big Cat Sightings		1	5	8	12	18	10	10	10		31	105
Big Cat/Wolf/Fox		1										1
Bird Registration		3		2		1		1	3		3	13
Birds			1	5	2	1	3			2	5	19
Burning				2								2
Concern for Wildlife		13	50	67	32	77	78	24	22	15	44	422
Corvids				1		2						3
COTES											1	1
Cruelty		9	19	26	15	20	9	12	5	12	40	167
Dangerous Dogs/Animals		3	2	8	6	3	10	1	2	8	40	83
Dead Animals/Birds		19	58	62	20	57	16	26	43	5	136	442
Deer Coursing		1		1				4				6
Developers								1	1			2
Domestic Animals		1	3	6	6	3	3	2	1		9	34
Egg Collection				1								1
Endangered Species							1				1	2
Environmental Damage							1	9				10
European Protected Species		1	1			1	1	2	16		8	30
Fish											1	1
Fox		3	3	5	3	5	6		1	1	1	28
Game											2	2
Golden Eagle											1	1
Hunting (Not Fox)		8	2	2	4	1		15	5			37
Illegal Fighting						1	9		2		1	13
Injured Animals/Birds		1	20	16	24	59	25	12	33	3	27	220
Insects		1	1	1	1	3	11	1	1		1	21
Internet Related		1	1					1		2	1	6
Kestrel			1									1
Killing Animals/Birds		3	10	6	10	9	7	11	3	8	16	83
Livestock/Farming			7	10	33	32	12	7	4		36	141
Lost and Found		3	21	26	10	26	17	3	20	1	7	134
Marine Species		2	2	6		3	2	5	3		28	51
Nest Disturbance									1			1
Newts/Frogs				1	1							2
No Further Details				1		1	6					8
Non Wildlife Criminal Activity		1		1		3		5	5	1	2	18
Off Roading				1				1	2			4
Operational Information	19	1	39	28	11	12	8	18	8	2	30	176
Orchids											1	1
Otter Related		3	1						3		1	8
Owl				1		2						3
Peregrine Falcon											2	2
Pet Shops	1	1				1	1					4
Plants/Trees					1	2	1	6			1	11
Rabbit/Hare		2	4	1		4	2	3	1		1	18
Raptor Related	2	4	19	7	1	1	2	2	7		10	55
Red Kite											1	1
Reptiles		1		2		1	2		1		1	8
Road Related		2	83	209	94	145	185	10	45		24	797
Seal Related		4	7	43		19	4		22		29	128
Shellfish	2		2	2					1		5	12
Shooting	6	3	21	7	3	9	5	10	9	7	16	96
Snake Related		15	7	5	18	18	20	6	5		6	100
Suspicious Activity	15	25	93	176	6	49	19	40	49	10	100	582
Swan Related	5	17	59	109	49	59	39	14	37	28	47	463
Taxidermy	1		2								4	7
Theft			7	5	3	7		3	6	3	16	50
Traps/Snares					1				1			2
Unconfirmed Poisoning		1				1						2
Wild Caught Birds	1	1	1	2	3		1			4	2	15
Grand Total	52	155	553	862	369	657	516	265	378	112	744	4663

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Appendix Five ~ Summary of new UK Wildlife Crime Priorities and Intelligence Requirements

UK WILDLIFE CRIME PRIORITIES 2011 – 2013

PRIORITY ⁹⁴	PREVENTION	INTELLIGENCE	ENFORCEMENT
BADGER PERSECUTION Plan Owner(s): Barry Fryer (RSPCA); Mike Flynn (SSPCA); Stephen Philpott (USPCA) Objective: Improve and increase the recording of incidents, crimes and intelligence for Badger Persecution. Improve the investigation process and increase awareness of Badger Persecution across the UK	Lead: Ian Hutchison (Scottish Badgers) (Scotland and England & Wales)	Lead: NWCUC	Lead(s): Mark Rasbeary (North Yorks); Ian Briggs (RSPCA) (England & Wales); Charlie Everitt (NWCUC); Jim Cormack (SSPCA) (Scotland)
BAT PERSECUTION Plan Owner: Julia Hanmer (BCT) Objective: To reduce bat crime by: ~ working with key stakeholders to raise awareness of responsibilities and criminal offences against bats, promoting a preventative approach and improving the submission of intelligence and standards of investigation relating to bats across the UK	Lead: BCT	Lead: NWCUC	Lead: BCT
CITES ISSUES 3 current CITES priorities of Ivory, Tortoises and Traditional Medicines ⁹⁵ Plan Owner: Charles Mackay (UKBA) Objective: Increase the number of disruption activities and detections of illegal trade in CITES priority species by: Increasing the amount of targeted compliance activity, increasing the number of intelligence submissions and intelligence products produced, improve the quality of Analytical Assessments and complete in agreed time-scales, and increase the number of investigations and enforcement outcomes	Lead: John Hounslow (Animal Health)	Lead: NWCUC	Lead(s): Ian Knox (Met) / Guy Clarke (UKBA)
FRESHWATER PEARL MUSSELS Plan Owner: Iain Sime (SNH) Objective: Raise awareness of criminality affecting freshwater pearl mussels in order to facilitate intelligence and incident reporting, leading to increased prevention and enforcement action	Lead: Ben Ross (SNH)	Lead: NWCUC	Lead: Supt Alan Smailes (Grampian)
POACHING (Deer Poaching/Coursing, Fish Poaching and Hare Coursing) Plan Owner(s): Doug Macadam (SRPBA) (Scotland); Tom Blades (BASC) (England & Wales) Objective: To increase the level of awareness of poaching and hare coursing as serious wildlife crimes and build better trust and relationships between the law enforcement agencies and local rural communities, both leading to increased prevention activity, intelligence flows and enforcement success (Scotland)	Lead(s): Colin Sheddon (BASC) (Scotland) Peter Watson (Deer Initiative) (England & Wales)	Lead: NWCUC	Lead(s): Alan Stewart (Tayside) (Scotland); TBC (England & Wales)
RAPTOR PERSECUTION (including poisoning, egg theft, chick theft, taking from the wild and nest disturbance/destruction and to concentrate on golden eagle, goshawk, hen harrier, peregrine, red kite and white-tailed eagle) Plan Owner(s): Chief Constable Richard Crompton (England & Wales); Supt Alan Smailes (Scotland) Objective: Raise community trust and awareness to facilitate intelligence and incident reporting, leading to increased prevention and enforcement activity relating to Raptor Persecution	Lead(s): Des Thomson (SNH) (Scotland); Paul Horswill (Natural England) (England & Wales)	Lead: NWCUC	Lead(s): Supt Alan Smailes (Grampian) (Scotland); Supt Dave Lynch (Lincolnshire) (England & Wales)

⁹⁴ Priorities are presented in *alphabetical* order, *not* order of importance

⁹⁵ Including Rhino Horn

UK WILDLIFE CRIME INTELLIGENCE REQUIREMENTS 2011 – 2013

Intelligence Requirement ⁹⁶	OBJECTIVE
CITES – Annex A & B Orchid species Plan Owners: Madeleine Groves (RBG Kew); John Hounslow (Animal Health)	To increase intelligence and incident submissions to the NWCUC
CITES – Timber (with focus on Ramin) Plan Owner: Charles Mackay (UKBA)	To increase intelligence and incident submissions to the NWCUC
Finch trapping Plan Owners: Mike Flynn (SSPCA); Barry Fryer (RSPCA); Stephen Philpott (USPCA)	To increase intelligence and incident submissions to the NWCUC
Illegal taking of wild bird eggs (Op Easter) Plan Owner: Alan Stewart (Tayside Police)	To increase intelligence and incident submissions to the NWCUC
Illegal trade in Raptors Plan Owner: Nevin Hunter (Animal Health)	To increase intelligence and incident submissions to the NWCUC
Illegal trade in Parrots Plan Owner: Nevin Hunter (Animal Health)	To increase intelligence and incident submissions to the NWCUC
Introduction of Non Native Species Plan Owner: TBC	To increase intelligence and incident submissions to the NWCUC

⁹⁶ Presented in *alphabetical* order, *not* order of importance