

**Fourth UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies Environment Ministers' Council
Meeting**

28 - 29 April 2021 (by Zoom)

Statement

Summary

In this Statement, the Council recognises the context of its meeting, stressing the value of, and responsibilities to, the natural environment. It expresses appreciation of the work and outputs of the preceding technical conference "*Staying Connected for Conservation in a Changed World*", complementing those of the Council's own earlier meetings, and underlines the importance of:

- UN Decade of Restoration, especially in regard to nature-based solutions as cost-effective ways to address many current issues, and to invasive species and biosecurity
- Fighting Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease
- UK's continuing resourcing of the "Blue Belt" and extending to territories in other situations
- Legislation and best practice for environmental impact assessments and policy
- Fulfilling international conservation commitments and assessing progress
- The support services by territory NGOs and their umbrella body
- Territories' Involvement in international fora and agreements
- Building resilience to climate-change (and Covid-19) impacts, especially through carbon-capture and biodiversity, noting the value of Natural Capital Accounting (NCA)
- The potential of novel types of funding for conservation, including green/blue economy and sustainable financing, alternatives to tourism-based income, and carbon-capture funding
- The vital nature of environmental education and championing.

The Council addresses also representation at CoPs in this important year, as well as the *Blue Islands Charter* and the *Leaders' Pledge for Nature*. In respect of UK Government's funding of conservation in the Overseas Territories, the Council reiterates the need for this by territory conservation bodies and their umbrella NGO, and underlines some of its earlier calls and raises further ways in which addressing of priorities could make this more cost-effective, including in the context of the loss by the territories of significant EU funding.

Main Text

1. We, the portfolio holders for the environment in our respective territories or dependencies, held our fourth Environment Ministers' Council meeting by Zoom on Wednesday 28th and Thursday 29th April 2021. We continue to fulfil the role recognised by the November 2017 Joint Ministerial Council, which emphasised the importance of meetings of environment ministers in work on environmental management and climate change issues. Since our first meeting, in Gibraltar in 2015, we have faced major challenges. Volcanic eruptions in the Caribbean, followed by the unprecedented hurricanes of 2017, seriously damaged infrastructure and local economies. COVID-19 has had a global impact, but has had a particular impact on those economies, including many represented here, with a high dependence on tourism. The United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU has led to a reappraisal of future funding arrangements for environmental work. We welcomed the opportunity afforded by this Council to address our challenges through joint and collaborative working, and to develop common priorities and approaches. Unfortunately, circumstances prevented the Rt Hon Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park, Minister of State for the Pacific and the Environment at the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office and the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, from fulfilling his wish to participate.

2. We express our sympathy and support for St Vincent and the Grenadines in their current tragic emergency, so similar in many ways to that suffered by one of our member territories, Montserrat, some 20 years ago. We feel deeply for our friends and colleagues there.

3. We value the support of our UK Overseas Territories Association (UKOTA) in addressing many of our links with UK Government and of UKOTA and of the UK Overseas Territories Conservation Forum (UKOTCF) in pursuing and facilitating many environmental aspects important to our territories and their natural and human welfare.

4. The biodiversity of the territories and dependencies we represent is considerable. We have 3,300 endemic species, compared with around 90 in the UK. About 75% of these are globally threatened. Our ecosystems contain some of the rarest, and most threatened habitat types: we have, for example, nearly 5000 km² of coral reefs, which makes the UK the twelfth largest reef nation in the world. Our environmental capital has underpinned sustainable livelihoods in our populations for many generations, and can help continued growth in our economies and our living standards, as well as public health. But it is increasingly under threat, and needs both safeguarding and management. We recognise the hard spending choices facing UK and Territory politicians post-pandemic, but note the conclusions of the HM Treasury-commissioned report by Professor Sir Partha Dasgupta, and the Prime Minister's comment on it: "This year is critical in determining whether we can stop and reverse the concerning trend of fast-declining biodiversity."

5. We confirm our commitment to conserve our environmental capital, and, recognising its global importance, have chosen to be included in UK's ratification of international environmental

agreements. We share with the UK a partnership approach to integrating environmental considerations in government decision-making, marked in the case of most Overseas Territories by individual Environment Charters as envisaged in the 1999 White Paper *Partnership for Progress and Prosperity*, on which the 2012 White Paper *The Overseas Territories: Security, Success and Sustainability* is explicitly built. The approach is shared by other territories and dependencies through their commitment to the international agreements in which they are included. The Territories are important to the delivery of UK's global environmental promises. For example, Tristan's declaration of a marine protected zone tipped UK over its target of 4 million km² of protected ocean. The Territories are a positive asset to be celebrated, and not a cash drain.

6. We recognise that Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies have materially different relationships with the UK and we further recognise that there are differences between Overseas Territories. These differences are particularly reflected in approaches to funding, which we recognised in our consideration of future aspirations, expectations and obligations. But for all of us, particularly in the light of the major challenges noted above, funding remains the key issue. External funding for initiatives to tackle the priorities we identified in previous meetings, such as unsustainable development, invasive species and the impacts of climate change, remains a challenge. For some of us the EU was a source of considerable funds for project work, technical advice and infrastructure development. While we welcomed Lord Ahmad's statement, following our 2017 Alderney meeting, that there would be an increase in funding for terrestrial and marine projects in the territories through the Darwin Plus programme, terrestrial conservation, in particular, has seen little benefit.

7. With the additional input of the recent technical conference "Staying Connected for Conservation in a Changed World," whose conclusions and recommendations we welcome, we have considered progress on priority areas we had previously identified, and discussed areas of particular concern. These are set out below.

7 i. UN Decade of Restoration: invasive species and biosecurity

We remain concerned about the environmental, social and economic damage caused by invasive species. We note that the costs of their removal greatly exceed the costs of prevention. Effective action requires wide consultation, stakeholder engagement, especially of active conservation NGOs, and public awareness campaigns. We recognise that long-term biosecurity, together with the development of early warning and rapidly adaptive response systems, needs to be resourced at the local and regional levels to prevent introduction and spread as new threats emerge.

We agreed the great potential for nature-based solutions as extremely cost-effective ways to address many current issues, and exchanged our varied and respective experiences to amplify these.

7 ii. Stony coral tissue loss disease

We note with grave concern that, since our last meeting, the rapid spread of stony coral tissue loss disease (SCTLD) has begun to destroy the structural coral of Caribbean reefs. This is damaging to the biodiversity and economy of our territories, and, ultimately, poses a global threat. Immediate engagement is essential to stem the spread, and to establish land-based facilities for the preservation of genetic samples and the eventual repopulation of reefs when environmental conditions permit. An urgent international response is necessary, drawing on the experience of neighbouring countries, particularly the USA. We appeal to the UK Government and other potential funders to support those governments and NGOs currently addressing the issue, and to play a leading role in facilitating local and regional collaboration.

7 iii. Blue Belt

At our 2018 meeting in the Isle of Man, we welcomed Blue Belt funding for extensive marine protection around oceanic territories, and recognised also the success of co-operative fishery management alongside marine protected areas. We join the participants in the recent technical conference “Staying Connected for Conservation in a Changed World” in calling on the UK Government to commit funding to support the continuation and expansion of the Blue Belt programme for the remaining years of the current parliament, in order to (a) provide the necessary financial and technical support to bring about effective and locally-led protection and sustainable management of their large-scale MPAs; and (b) expand the Blue Belt Programme to other territories, including those not in mid-ocean, as required. Safeguarding vital marine biodiversity and enabling ecosystem recovery will sustain the blue economies of tourism and fishing, enable sequestration of ‘blue carbon’, and improve territories’ climate resilience against increasingly frequent and stronger extreme weather events.

7 iv. Legislation, environmental impact assessments, and policy

We continue to welcome sharing of best practice in ensuring environmental considerations form an integral part of development planning. We support government facilitation of early engagement of environmental professionals with developers, and timely and open environmental impact assessments (EIAs) for all major developmental proposals, including Government-funded projects. EIAs should meet best-practice standards and be transparent and open to independent experts and the public in a comprehensive, accessible and non-technical manner, with adequate time for consideration and comment. We welcome the recommendation from the recent technical conference that our governments should ensure environmentally robust planning legislation to help develop resilience to extreme weather events. We support the establishment of effective, properly financed enforcement mechanisms, with provision for the role of NGOs in the assessment process.

7 v. Fulfilling international commitments

We recall our governments' commitments to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development by choosing to be included in various international environmental agreements (see para 5). We note that, in 2021, the UK Government and UKOTs will celebrate 20 years of the existence of the Environment Charters and their commitments, not created under the Charters but brought together from under other international measures. We again note the invaluable role played by the UK Overseas Territories Conservation Forum's (UKOTCF's) "Review of performance by 2016 of UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies in implementing the 2001 Environment Charters or their equivalents and moving towards the Aichi Targets and Sustainable Development Targets" which we endorsed at our 2017 meeting. We regret that the UK Government has not provided the modest financial support we sought to enable the updating of this. We are grateful that the UKOTCF is nevertheless undertaking an update using unpaid skilled volunteers, and call on all to assist with this.

7 vi. Target setting and support services

We recognise, as we have done at previous meetings, that conservation workers in our territories benefit from cooperation with NGO bodies experienced in project design and operation, and which can draw on a wide range of expertise. We urge the UK Government to consider supporting such bodies so that they can deploy their skilled volunteer and paid personnel in helping the territories and raising and empowering local capacity. We note that the UK Government has supported working conferences for conservation practitioners, organised by UKOTCF, as an opportunity to share experience and skills; this has led to maximising cost-effectiveness of project funds. We value these working conferences highly, and encourage the UK Government to contribute substantially to UKOTCF's future physical or online conferences for practical territory conservationists, in accordance with its commitment to 'promote better cooperation and the sharing of experience between and among the Overseas Territories and with other states and communities which face similar environmental problems.'

We welcome the UK Government's often-stated recognition that its responsibility for a considerable proportion of the world's biodiversity depends to a great extent on taxa in territories and dependencies which we represent. We call on the UK Government to recognise, in particular, the importance of our endemic taxa, and to provide support for practical steps in their conservation. The facilitation and assistance roles fulfilled by NGOs are important in this, particularly in helping us to identify the key issues, to establish baselines, and to set ambitious, realistic and achievable targets.

7 vii. Involvement in international fora and the extension of multilateral environmental agreements

We greatly regret UK Government's apparent (unilateral) decision, to reverse our earlier agreement which welcomed the continued inclusion of representatives of our territories and dependencies in UK delegations to conferences of parties to international environmental conventions, at a significant level, and call on UK Government to reverse this retrograde step in sustainability. We note with approval the effectiveness of the previous consultation arrangements both between us and the UK Government, and between ourselves, to agree how we should best be represented.

We recognise that the UK Government makes, and is accountable for, international commitments on behalf of its territories and dependencies. Our position remains that inclusion in the UK's ratification should be a matter for the territory concerned, and that, in this respect, the wishes of the territory concerned should be paramount, and we regret that some requests by a territory to join certain agreements remain unimplemented several years after the requests.

We support the recommendation from the recent technical conference that future target-setting in the context of international biodiversity and climate-change should recognise the needs of territories and dependencies. We would welcome support, including through NGOs and UK agencies, for those territories which have not yet been able to seek inclusion in UK's ratification of international conservation conventions, or which have further needs to be met relating to the conventions in which they are included.

7 viii. Natural Capital Accounting (NCA); building resilience to climate change (and Covid-19) impacts; carbon-capture and biodiversity

We recognise the need to develop and support nature-based solutions to help increase resilience, and the use of both economic and environmental evidence, notably Natural Capital Accounting (NCA), of the benefits that the environment provides. NCA should inform decision-making, helping to conserve and restore natural environments and their ability to support sustainably territories' prosperity and well-being. Examples include the carbon-capture benefits of peatlands, kelp forests, mangrove and sea-grass meadows; the storm-defence roles of the latter two, sand-dunes, coral-reefs and other coastal flats; the many services of terrestrial (including the wrongly disparaged "bush") and wetland ecosystems; developing habitat restoration targets and exploring the potential for carbon-zero economies. Our efforts in this direction should be recognised by the UK Government as part of the overall UK response to such issues, and supported accordingly.

We further recognise the need to conduct rapid climate-change vulnerability assessments of threatened and endangered species and to ensure species action-plans include climate-change risks, with associated mitigating actions aimed at increasing climate-change resiliency.

7 ix. Novel funding; green/blue economy and sustainable financing; alternatives to tourism-based income; carbon-capture funding

We stress our support for transitions to low- and no-carbon economies and low emissions generally, and exchanged our respective experiences in these regards, welcoming the progress that individual territories have already made and encouraging further progress based on our shared experiences.

We continue to believe that the hypothecation of visitors' taxes for environmental work, including the development of refugia for threatened species, is a valuable tool in conservation, and regret the UK Government's apparent movement away from supporting this approach. We note with interest the recommendation from the recent technical conference that increased national expenditure on protected area management, and securing other benefits from ecosystem-services, could be funded by the creation of an environment levy, given that such services benefit the whole community.

We endorse the recommendations of previous meetings that we should continue to investigate the potential for jointly seeking support from international funding sources and commercially-based bodies to establish a dedicated Conservation Fund. We also confirm our support for exploring the potential for aid funds currently supporting Caribbean projects, e.g. CARICOM, to contribute to an environmental small grants programme. We agree with the recommendations of the recent technical conference that we should explore with offshore finance centres in our territories the possibilities for the creation and management of endowment funds, such as the Bahamas Protected Areas Fund, which can support sustainable financing. We further endorse the conference's recommendations that grants should be approved by independent boards, with majority representation from civil society bodies experienced and actively involved in conservation.

We also believe further recommendations from the technical conference in this area should be explored:

- commercial enterprises should contribute in some way each time a protected area or threatened species appears in their adverts in order to raise money for protected area conservation;
- the UK government could forgive territories' debts by debt-for-nature swaps while mandating local investment in protected areas, where UK loans have been issued, for example disaster relief loans after the 2017 hurricane season;

- while ensuring core funding is maintained, UK grants should provide funds for research and development, fulfilling international agreements, and support for third sector organisations engaged in work at local and regional levels;
- our governments and third-sector organisations should cooperate to develop cross-territory sustainable tourism guidelines, as well as a certification programme for tourism operators (for example, dive operators, tour guides, etc.), and take advantage of the IUCN publication *Guidelines on development in sensitive areas*. Such a certification programme would have more impact than single-territory certification schemes. Rebuilding sustainable tourism in the aftermath of COVID-19 will need the engagement of all levels of civil society, and NGOs should be supported so that they can play a full part in our collective response.

We recall Gibraltar's presentation at our 2017 meeting about the necessity of, and challenges in, accessing large climate funds and other major funding sources, and urge the UK Government to help us explore these where appropriate, as well as remove constraints which impede inward investment in some territories. In this context, we support the recommendation from the recent technical conference that NGOs and other bodies explore, for both climate-change and biodiversity-conservation purposes, blue- and green-carbon funding, bonds based on natural capital and biodiversity, endowment funding models and other new approaches.

7 x. Environmental education and championing

We agree with the recent technical conference that we need national champions to gain international understanding of our biodiversity and the threats to it, and welcome the initiative by UKOTCF, in association with our territory personnel, in seeking champions amongst UK Parliamentarians and others in the public eye. This should be underpinned by local champions. To enable this to be successful our governments need to address the challenges of education and access to career opportunities, and should press for improved access to UK further educational opportunities, recognising the limited scope and high costs to students of tertiary education and work experience. We particularly call on the UK Government to ensure that its replacement for the EU Erasmus educational exchange scheme will be of equal benefit, and should explicitly include Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies.

We recognise the importance of training for teachers and of the development of educational material (including on natural disasters and resiliency), as well as the value of specific education officers on environmental issues, and the expertise that NGOs can provide. We encourage integration of biodiversity conservation, nature-based solutions and climate-change adaptation topics into UK and territory National Curricula, and encourage engagement with media and social networks to engage the wider public. We emphasise the need to reach the

whole of society: adults should understand the impact of their consumer choices and children should learn how to adapt to a changing world.

We recognise the urgent importance of compliance with our international commitments to regulate polluters and of supporting measures which will halt the biodiversity crisis and mitigate climate-change. We further recognise the value of working with NGOs and individuals to escalate a transition to a green economy, through: ensuring engagement and providing hands-on learning about restoration for our future leaders through running youth groups who enjoy the outside world; creating stepping stones for wildlife – where it can flourish; recognising and celebrating nature's gems; restoring habitats to safeguard important sites; working in partnership; and getting informed and encouraging local community input on public consultations on new developments that would impact on nature.

8. We agree to consult further after the meeting on our representation and presence at CoPs (CBD China 11-24 October; UNFCCC Glasgow 1-12 November), noting the importance of inclusion of our representative in the UK delegation, and noting that 94% of the globally important biodiversity for which UK is responsible depends on the Territories, as well as the considerable in-territory knowledge and expertise which will add value to the UK delegation.

9. We welcome the Blue Islands Charter, initiated by HM Government of Gibraltar in consultation with island nations, territories and other administrative levels, and signed by several of these at the Inter-Island Environmental Meeting in Alderney in 2019 and remotely by others. Those who have not yet signed agree to consider doing so.

10. We welcome the 2020 UN Summit on Diversity document *Leaders' Pledge for Nature – United to Reverse Biodiversity Loss by 2030 for Sustainable Development*, representing 84 countries from all regions, together with the European Union, committed to reversing biodiversity loss by 2030.

11. We recall the agreed partnership approach of UK and UKOT governments to integrating environmental aspects into all sectors via international conventions which led to the Environment Charters, a commitment to funding for terrestrial and marine projects in our territories through the Darwin Plus programme, and support through the Conflict Stability and Security Fund. We regret, therefore, that we continue to have concerns over barriers to effective deployment of UK Government environmental funding in our territories. In particular, we consider it important that those experienced in territory conservation work should have the main voice in determining where and how cross-territory funds available should be spent, so that this can be related to agreed priorities, and that the territories should not have to compete for the allocation of such funds through an assessment process external to them and largely removed from local knowledge.

We further regret the recent change, undertaken without consultation, segregating ODA-eligible Overseas Territories from the other Overseas Territories in the Darwin Plus scheme, and placing

them with foreign countries in the Darwin Main scheme. This means that, for the first time in 20 years, there is no biodiversity grant scheme for these territories, as Darwin Main requires also poverty-alleviation targets. Whilst in no way opposing poverty-alleviation, we believe this disadvantaging of ODA-eligible Territories is inappropriate. Amongst other consequences, it will mean that the uninhabited islands in these territories, including some of the most important and with no other income, will be ineligible. We call on UK Government to restore ODA-eligible Territories to an equal basis with their fellow Territories with immediate effect. For similar reasons, we regret that the recently announced Blue Planet Fund will require poverty-alleviation targets, thereby excluding support to some of the most important natural ecosystems for which UK is internationally responsible.

12. We welcome the constructive approach by the recent technical conference to identify solutions to other aspects of the situation and highlight their following recommendations:

- support should be given to long-term projects involving knowledge transfer to local NGOs through cooperation with the wider scientific and environmental community. The UK Government and other potential funders should focus resources on provision by experienced NGOs and others of the technical guidance and project officers needed to capitalise on the considerable local enthusiasm for conservation and environmental initiatives. We welcome progress made in the recruitment and deployment of citizen-scientists and citizen-conservationists, organised largely by NGOs, to further public ownership of these initiatives while recognising that costs need to be invested to release this major workforce;
- long-term funding is needed also for projects, such as those involving environmental recovery, that cannot be completed within the usual short time-frame. Sustainability cannot be built in a three-year cycle for habitats that take 30 years or more to come to fruition;
- local knowledge is essential in project-development and grant decisions. UK Government agencies were not funded by earlier UK Government grant funds for Overseas Territory conservation, but they are now. The UK Government needs to reverse its recent tendency to divert the use of traditional sources of grant-funding from cost-effective and experienced local and supporting UK NGO bodies to support instead UK government agencies and institutions, some of which are not experienced with some territory situations, however experienced they may be generally, and pay more regard to experience and proven success in the Overseas Territories, especially NGOs. The UK Government should revert to the more cost-effective approach of concentrating grant-funding on conservation bodies in the Overseas Territories and their umbrella body, rather than on research institutions and consultancies;

- UK government agencies working in the Overseas Territories should be more open to speaking with other stakeholders, especially NGOs, to avoid duplication of effort. They should recognise the capacity constraints on local NGOs, which in most cases depend on voluntary work, and ensure funding to enable their contributions are built into project budgets;
- a responsive funding programme is necessary for small projects. Modest funding for an NGO to manage it cost-effectively should be considered to alleviate capacity constraints in UK Government structures;
- UK Government funding applications need to be less bureaucratic and repetitive, and consideration of projects should not take many months more than the time for application preparation. The assessments should be by those with Overseas Territories project-running experience and not based on box-checking scores;
- linking organisations help our territories make the best use of science and other information for decision-making, where local government or NGO staff may lack the relevant technical expertise. Whilst the UK government has international responsibility for environmental issues in the Overseas Territories (House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee 2013), in practice that responsibility is devolved to the territories themselves. There is, therefore, little or no overall coordination, or mechanism for sharing expertise, which can lead to waste of resources in addressing problems to which solutions have been found elsewhere, and can fail to identify issues which others have seen as priorities. The further development of a loose, consultative structure of mutually reinforcing institutions, along the lines of the UKOTCF with its regional working groups, is a priority, which would be helped by support and recognition by UK government, as well as territory governments.

13. We recognise with thanks the key role that local conservation leaders play in maintaining community motivation throughout the planning and implementation of long-term conservation projects. Their importance cannot be overstated if we are to ensure that community support for conservation projects does not fade over generations, and that future conservation projects will be embraced as readily as those currently being undertaken.

14. We continue to regret that, whilst there is no legal impediment to funding from the UK National Lottery being used in support of the environment in the Overseas Territories, the policies and procedures of the Lottery funding bodies effectively prevent this. We ask, as we have done in previous meetings, the UK Government to undertake urgently a review of this situation, which would open up new horizons for cooperation, as well as removing what is becoming an irritant in our relationship.

15. At our previous meeting we expressed concerns at the impact of the UK's withdrawal from the European Union on the implementation of our environmental commitments. These included: the consequences of Gibraltar's enforced departure from the EU against the population's wishes and consequent loss of the EU's environmental safeguards; the loss of existing (and potentially much larger) environmental funding from EU sources to territories (which NGOs had fought long to secure); the reduction in co-operative linking with the overseas entities of other EU states; the loss of EU market access for key sustainable natural products; and the loss to some of the Crown Dependencies of landing ports for fishing, because these ports do not have the right designation, status or infrastructure. The issue of access to neighbouring ports of the Channel Islands is a matter of ongoing discussion with the French authorities. Experience over the intervening three years has in the majority of cases done little to reduce our concerns, and the extra bureaucracy and costs, loss of economic opportunities and environmental safeguards have become evident, with no compensatory benefits. The lack of clear progress on other issues continues to concern us. In particular, in respect of the UK Overseas Territories, the UK Government has indicated that funding to replace that from the EU will be forthcoming, but details of this remain unclear. We ask the UK Government to address this, and our other concerns, as a matter of priority.

We regret the failure by UK Government to achieve continuance of the Territories' previous tariff- and quota-free trade with the EU in its negotiations on removing such barriers for the UK itself. As a result, for example, 90% of the market of sustainably managed fisheries of the Falkland Islands has been affected, with consequent major negative impacts on the economy. After a delay due to technical trade factors, 90% of the income of Tristan da Cunha, again dependent on sustainably managed fisheries, could also be lost. We call on UK Government urgently to resume its responsibilities and address these issues within its current EU trade negotiations.

16. We agree to meet again, probably in spring 2022 by remote communications, and ask UKOTCF to continue in the role of Secretariat.

Appendix: List of Ministers and other lead representatives participating

Alderney: States Member Annie Burgess, Chair of Economic Development Committee

Anguilla: Hon. Kyle Hodge, Minister of Economic Development, Commerce, Information Technology & Natural Resources

Bermuda: Hon. Walter H Roban, JP, MP, Deputy Premier and Minister of Home Affairs

(British) Virgin Islands: Hon. Vincent O Wheatley, Minister for Natural Resources, Labour and Immigration

Falkland Islands: Hon. Teslyn Barkman MLA, Deputy Portfolio Holder for the Environment

Gibraltar: Hon. Prof. John Cortés, Minister for Education, Heritage, Environment, Energy and Climate Change

Guernsey: Deputy Lindsay de Sausmarez, President of the Committee for the Environment & Infrastructure

Isle of Man: Hon Geoffrey Boot MHK, Minister for Environment Food and Agriculture; and Hon. Ray Harmer MHK, Minister for Policy and Reform

Jersey: Deputy John Young, Minister for the Environment

Montserrat: Ms Janice Panton, UK Representative, on behalf of Hon. Cranston Buffonge MLA, Minister of Agriculture, Lands, Housing & Environment

St Helena: Darren Duncan, Head of Department, Agriculture & Natural Resources Division, on behalf of Councillor Cruyff G. Buckley, Chair, Environment & Natural Resources Committee

Sark: Ms Shakira Christodoulou, on behalf of Conseiller Helen Plummer, Chairman, Agriculture and Environment Committee of the Chief Pleas of Sark

Tristan da Cunha: Mr Chris Carnegy, UK representative, on behalf of Councillor James Glass, Chief Islander and Director of Fisheries

Turks & Caicos Islands: Ms Tracy Knight, Representative and Head of London Office, on behalf of Hon. Josephine O. Connolly, Minister of Tourism, Environment, Heritage, Maritime, Gaming and Disaster Management

(Cayman Islands: Apologies and best wishes for the meeting were received from Hon Wayne Panton, Premier and Minister of Sustainability and Climate Change, Cayman, where ministerial portfolios were being settled only the same week.)