Contract

Projecting UK Biodiversity Indicators into the future

JNCC SUPPORT CO

UK7: Contract details notice - Procurement Act 2023 - view information about notice types

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Scope

Reference

C25-0825-2110

Description

The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) is the statutory adviser to the UK Government and devolved administrations on UK and international nature conservation

Our role is to provide scientific evidence, information, and advice to inform decisions to protect the natural environment. Our specific role is to work on nature conservation issues that affect the UK as a whole and internationally, by:

• advising Government on the development and implementation of policies for, or affecting, nature conservation in the UK and internationally;

• providing advice and disseminating knowledge on nature conservation issues affecting the UK and internationally;

• establishing common standards throughout the UK for nature conservation, including monitoring, research, and the analysis of results; and

• commissioning or supporting research which it deems relevant to these functions.

Background to JNCC can be found on JNCC's website at: https://jncc.gov.uk/about-jncc/

2. Project Aims

The overall aim is to produce a proof-of-concept test on how UK Biodiversity Indicators can be projected into the future to help inform conservation decision-making.

The test will include making projections. These are not intended for operational use initially, but will aim to describe the steps, demonstrate potential outputs, and assess the feasibility of more routine application. The scope of the work at present is UK terrestrial biodiversity.

3. Project Background

The UK regularly publishes a range of biodiversity indicators (https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/uk-biodiversity-indicators-2024/). These UK Biodiversity Indicators (UKBI) are used to track and report progress against international commitments made through the Global Biodiversity Framework. The indicators are wide-ranging, and encompass pressures (e.g. pollution), policy and management interventions (e.g. sustainable forestry), environmental outcomes (e.g. species population trends), evidence about biodiversity, and public interest and support for conservation. Some of the UKBIs are also used/adapted by individual UK countries, and are an important tool for wider communication of how biodiversity is changing.

The analysis of current trends will continue to be essential. However, there is increasing recognition of the need for evidence about how the environment could change in future. There are several aspects to this, including:

• Understanding the likely 'Business-as-Usual' future trajectory for pressures and interventions

• Understanding impacts from individual policy options and decisions

• Investigating the interaction between multiple policies, and the likely net outcomes under different assumptions about implementation

• Understanding possible future changes in environmental pressures and the options for management and mitigation

This evidence can enable more informed discussions on the balance of policies and how investment is allocated. It can also identify risks and opportunities, and provide a communication tool to raise awareness of possible future environmental trajectories (as used in broadly similar ways e.g. in relation to climate), rather than only focusing on past trends.

Furthermore, projecting the UK Biodiversity Indicators gives a direct link with how the UK assesses progress on national and international environmental objectives. Being able to project these indicators and test responses to evolving policy priorities and wider socioeconomic changes would be a powerful tool to inform environmental decision-making. As such, JNCC are particularly interested in flexible and re-usable approaches that combine scenarios of potential environmental changes with models that project what effect these changes have on UKBIs.

Related JNCC-supported work

This project will contribute to a longer-term JNCC ambition to support the development and implementation of biodiversity projections to inform conservation decision-making, through the Biodiversity Pathways project (https://jncc.gov.uk/news/biodiversity-pathways-project-launched/). The project described in this invitation to tender is a standalone piece and does not rely on any previous work

4. Project Objectives

To meet the overall Project Aims (Section 2), the objectives are:

1) Agree at least one suitable scenario for projections. This can be existing or newly produced, but must involve some change in the key drivers that affect selected UK Biodiversity Indicators (i.e. the scenario cannot be 'no change from the current position').

2) Develop, document, and pilot a re-usable modelling approach to project selected UK Biodiversity Indicators under the scenario(s) for a 20-30 year period. We do not expect this to be suitable for using operationally without further testing, but it should be sufficiently developed to show the potential and to enable Objective 3.

3) Evaluate strengths, limitations, and transferability of the resulting methods and projections, to inform next steps in developing this approach.

5. Project Objectives: Detailed Tasks

1) Agree at least one suitable scenario for projections

We do not expect an extensive scenario development process - the main purpose of this contract is to develop and test modelling methods suitable for projecting UK Biodiversity

Indicators. As such, the scenario(s) used should identify key direct drivers of changes in the selected indicators and set reasonably plausible values for these. However, scenarios would not need to consider underlying policy or socioeconomic shifts necessary to affect the driver values in this way. Existing scenario(s) can be used if relevant.

The UK Biodiversity Indicators used must be suitable for projection for the UK and ideally for individual UK countries. We are particularly interested in the indicators listed below, and would like to include at least one indicator from Group 1 (species trends) and at least one indicator from Group 2 (pressures, habitat condition). Note that several of these indicators include multiple components - ideally, each component would be projected though if this does not add much new information or is impractical with the time/evidence available then the focus can be narrowed.

Where bidders are aware of overlap with previous or ongoing work on biodiversity projections, this relationship should be explained with a description of how proposals build on rather than duplicate other work.

GROUP 1: UK Biodiversity Indicators relating to species trends. Priority to include projections for at least one indicator from the following list

Status of threatened species

Conservation status of UK species of European importance

Priority species abundance

Trends in the relative abundance of priority species

Priority species distribution

Trends in distribution of UK priority species

Birds of the wider countryside and at sea

Trends in abundance of commoner native birds

Insects of the wider countryside (butterflies)

Trends in abundance of resident butterfly species

Plants of the wider countryside

Change in abundance of plant species in four UK broad habitat types

Mammals of the wider countryside (bats)

Changes in relative abundance of GB breeding bat species

Status of pollinating insects

Changes in the distribution of bees and hoverflies

GROUP 2: UK Biodiversity Indicators of pressures and habitat condition. Priority to include projections for at least one indicator from the following list

Air pollution

Area affected by acidification and area affected by excess nitrogen

Invasive species

Number of invasive non-native species established

Changes in the extent of invasive non-native species

Protected areas

Changes in the extent and condition of Protected Areas

Status of threatened habitats

Conservation status of UK habitats of European importance

2) Develop, document, and pilot a re-usable modelling approach to project indicators under the chosen scenario(s), for a 20-30 year period

There is no requirement to use a specific modelling approach. However, the methods (including code) must be clearly and transparently described in sufficient detail to enable re-use and external evaluation. Consideration should also be given to how the approach could be generalised to other indicators (see Task 3, below).

The choice of method should be justified as suitable for projecting indicators for a 20-30 year period, and ideally for individual UK countries. Projections should be accompanied by an explanation of the approach to validating outputs, and descriptions of assumptions and uncertainties. We recognise that projections can be complex to produce, and we do not expect the methods to be suitable for using operationally without further testing. However, the content should be sufficiently developed to show the potential and to enable Objective 3.

3) Evaluate strengths, limitations, and transferability of the resulting methods and projections, to inform next steps in developing this approach

Objective evaluation of strengths and limitations of the projections is essential to inform future work. The detail of this will depend on the outcomes, but is likely to include:

i) Would the methods be feasible to apply operationally, e.g. on a regular basis and/or with new scenarios or policy questions? If yes, what is required to achieve that?

ii) Could the methods be extended to other UK Biodiversity Indicators? If yes, which indicators and what would be required to achieve that?

iii) What additional evidence would help improve the projections and/or enable better validation of outputs?

iv) Are there additional indicators not currently within (or in-development for) the UKBI that would be informative for conservation and amenable to scenarios and modelling?

Contract 1

Supplier

- UK CENTRE FOR ECOLOGY & HYDROLOGY

Contract value

- £83,264 excluding VAT
- £99,916.80 including VAT

Below the relevant threshold

Date signed

22 December 2025

Contract dates

- 22 December 2025 to 30 November 2026
- Possible extension to 31 December 2026
- 1 year, 10 days

Description of possible extension:

The Authority may extend the term of the Contract until 31st December 2026 ("Extension"). The terms of the Contract will apply throughout the period of any Extension.

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 73110000 - Research services
- 79310000 - Market research services
- 90700000 - Environmental services

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Procedure

Procedure type

Below threshold - unknown

Supplier

UK CENTRE FOR ECOLOGY & HYDROLOGY

Maclean Building Benson Lane

Wallingford

OX10 8BB

United Kingdom

Email: tendersupport@ceh.ac.uk

Region: UKJ14 - Oxfordshire

Small or medium-sized enterprise (SME): No

Voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE): No

Contract 1

Contracting authority

JNCC SUPPORT CO

- Companies House: 05380206
- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PRPL-6981-TDJT

QUAY HOUSE, 2 EAST STATION ROAD, FLETTON QUAYS

PETERBOROUGH

PE2 8YY

United Kingdom

Email: contractqueries@jncc.gov.uk

Region: UKH11 - Peterborough

Organisation type: Public authority - central government

Devolved regulations that apply: Scotland