

Profiles of UKOTCF Council Members and other Officers

Council Members	
<p>Victor Brownlees</p> <p>Victor worked in both the public and private sectors in the UK over almost 30 years. After initially training as a Chartered Public Finance Accountant with the National Audit Office and then with PwC in London, he held a number of senior roles in local government – for example, as Chief Executive of the former Armagh City & District Council in Northern Ireland (2001-2007), and Chief Executive of Telford & Wrekin Council in the West Midlands (2009-2011). For a number of years, he owned and managed his own consulting firm, working as advisor to a range of private sector companies supplying services to the public sector.</p> <p>From September 2014 to May 2017, Victor served as Chief Executive and Head of the Civil Service for the government of the island of Alderney – a Crown Dependency in the Channel Islands and part of the Bailiwick of Guernsey. In this role, he worked closely with the local environmental conservation charity – the Alderney Wildlife Trust (AWT) – and acted as Chair of the Board for the <i>Living Islands</i> project – a partnership comprising the AWT, the local heritage society (Alderney Society) and government. The project was funded jointly by the Alderney government (the States of Alderney) and the Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts, and made significant progress in promoting Alderney's stunning wildlife and history to new audiences. At its heart was a recognition of the key roles for the island's significant environmental and heritage assets in growing the tourism industry and a commitment to prove that environmental conservation can go hand in hand with local economic regeneration.</p> <p>The success of Alderney's <i>Living Islands</i> initiative led to Victor and his colleague, Roland Gauvain (Director of the Alderney Wildlife Trust), presenting it as a case-study for other jurisdictions at the UKOTCF Conference in Gibraltar in July 2015. Victor was also invited by Dr John Cortés (Gibraltar's Environment Minister) to attend and participate in the first meeting of Ministers, and equivalents, from the UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies at the close of the conference. Victor continued his association with the Forum and hosted the second Ministerial meeting in Alderney in April 2017, which he co-chaired with Dr Cortés.</p> <p>Victor is passionate about knowledge-sharing and mutual co-operation between the UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies. At the April 2017 meeting in Alderney, the various 13 jurisdictions represented agreed unanimously to progress work in this regard. Whilst Victor is relocating to the USA with his American-born wife and their son, he hopes to continue making a contribution to this work and to supporting the Forum generally.</p>	 A portrait photograph of Victor Brownlees, a man with shoulder-length brown hair and a beard, wearing a white button-down shirt. He is standing outdoors in front of a rocky coastline with the sea and a cloudy sky in the background.

Liz Charter

After 18 years as Principal Biodiversity Officer for the Isle of Man Government, Liz is now a freelance island biodiversity consultant. Her career in nature conservation spans 30 years, working first as a freshwater ecologist with the former Nature Conservancy Council. She established the successful Orkney Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group where she worked for 10 years as an adviser, publishing a handbook for farmers and introducing whole-farm nutrient balances to reduce pollution to lochs.

In 1998, she and her family moved to the Isle of Man to set up the statutory nature conservation office within the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. She is familiar with the conservation issues of small islands, and with international conservation agreements, working within and outside the EU and for government and an NGO. Liz maintains her wetland involvement and has attended two Conferences of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention. Most recently, she has been involved in regional marine spatial planning discussions in the Irish Sea. Liz served as the chairman of the UKOTCF Europe Territories Working Group until 2014 when she took over the Chair of UKOTCF, until 2016. In her spare time she leads botanical tours and plays the flute.

**Sarita Francis OBE**

Sarita holds a BA in Geography and Linguistics and a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education from the University of the West Indies.

Sarita Francis took up the position of Director of the Montserrat National Trust in 2013 after retiring as Deputy Governor in the Montserrat Public Service. Her career in the Public Service spans some forty years during which she worked in Education as a Geography Teacher and Deputy Principal until 1993. She served as Director of Housing from 1999 to 2001, and was appointed Permanent Secretary to the Chief Minister in 2001. She was promoted to Chief Establishment Officer/Deputy Governor in 2007 and was instrumental in delivering the Public Service Reform Programme across Government. Mrs Francis played a pivotal role in the implementation of the changes brought about by the New Montserrat Constitution in 2008.

Sarita Francis became involved with the Montserrat National Trust in 1985, and headed the Environmental Education Committee. She was transferred to the Trust to work as Environmental Education in 1994. She was President of the Trust during the height of the volcanic crisis and had to assume management of the organization and was instrumental in relocating the Trust Office and Museum from Plymouth to its new headquarters in Olveston.

Apart from her years of voluntary service to the Trust, Sarita has served on many Boards including the Montserrat Tourist Board, the Bank of Montserrat and Credit Union Boards, and UWI Guild of Graduates. She is a member of the Cultural Centre Committee and the Montserrat's Arts Council. Sarita has one son, Dion, who is a Civil Engineer and Director of his Company, Engineering Design and Construction (EDC) Ltd, in Montserrat.



Dace McCoy Ground (Chairman, Wider Caribbean Working Group)
Dace McCoy Ground is a Harvard-trained American lawyer. She lived in the UK Overseas Territories from 1985 when she was hired by the Cayman Islands Government as Marine Parks Coordinator, responsible for establishing a marine parks system for those islands. That being achieved, she then worked to establish the National Trust for the Cayman Islands and became its founding Executive Director.

For the following 20 years to 2012 she lived in Bermuda and the Turks and Caicos Islands, being closely involved with the National Trusts of those two jurisdictions. During that time, she has worked on several Forum projects, such as the Environment Charter implementation, an OTEP-funded project. In 2011, the Bermuda National Trust gave her the Silver Palmetto Award, the Trust's highest honour, to acknowledge her many years of exemplary service.

In 2012, her husband Sir Richard Ground retired from his post as Chief Justice of Bermuda and they moved to live in Derbyshire, his favourite angling location. Sadly, Richard, a valued supporter of UKOTCF, died in 2014. Lady Ground continues to work closely with the Bermuda National Trust and the Forum.



Nigel Haywood CVO (Chairman, Southern Oceans Working Group)
Nigel retired from the Diplomatic Service in 2014. His last posting (2010-2014) was in Stanley, as Governor of the Falkland Islands and Commissioner for South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands. His previous postings include Ambassador to Estonia (2003-2007) and Consul-General in Basra (2008-2009).

During Nigel's time in Stanley he worked to bring together environmental work in the South Atlantic, as a founding director of the South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute (SAERI). This has proved valuable in developing areas of shared interest, most notably on Geographic Information Systems and fisheries conservation. His major environmental concern was South Georgia, establishing one of the world's largest MPAs, and pushing forward, in conjunction with the South Georgia Heritage Trust, one of the most ambitious habitat restorations ever undertaken anywhere.

Nigel has an MSc in Biodiversity Conservation from Bournemouth University. This focused on habitat requirements for specialist butterfly species which had become victims of environmental degradation. He wrote the species action plan for the Falklands



fritillary, the Falklands' only resident butterfly. He is working with Bournemouth University, Butterfly Conservation, SAERI and Falklands Conservation to see how that can best be implemented.

Nigel lives in Corfe Castle in Dorset, in the centre of the most biologically diverse 10 kilometre square in Britain. He is currently undertaking research into reasons for the decline of the Lulworth skipper butterfly.

Boyd McCleary CMG CVO (Chairman, proposed Climate Change & Renewable Energy Working Group)

Boyd joined the Northern Ireland Civil Service in 1982 and served in the Department of Agriculture. In 1985, he was seconded to the Diplomatic Service as Agricultural Attaché at the British Embassy in Bonn, then capital of the Federal Republic of Germany. On leaving Bonn, Boyd transferred to the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and spent the next forty years on the move, serving in Seoul, Ankara, Ottawa, Düsseldorf and Kuala Lumpur, before taking up the appointment as Governor of the British Virgin Islands (2010-14). His London postings included Director of Estates and Director of Roll-out for a major new accounting and procurement system for the FCO.

Boyd has had a life-long interest in flora and fauna. As High Commissioner in Malaysia (2006-10), he worked closely with a number of organisations involved in researching and protecting the country's environment, including the Royal Society's South East Asia Rainforest Research Programme, which had a wonderful research centre in Danum Valley, Sabah.

As Governor of the British Virgin Islands, Boyd was again heavily engaged in conservation issues, such as the head-start programme for the Anegada rock iguana and the eradication of non-invasive species to protect the magnificent frigate-bird colony on Great Tobago. He collaborated closely with the National Parks Trust of the Virgin Islands and local NGOs, with UKOTCF and with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Kew Gardens.

On retiring from the Diplomatic Service in 2014, Boyd moved to a small village in Hampshire, where he aims to explore the local environment, while retaining an interest in wider conservation matters.



Iain Orr

Iain Orr acts as UKOTCF's Honorary Parliamentary Adviser. His long-term interest in islands and their environments came together in his final job at the FCO, towards the end of the 1990s. He joined what soon became the Environment Policy Department, and was responsible for drafting and negotiating the environment chapter of the 1999 White Paper on UK's relationships with the UKOTs. He established the 1999 London conference *A Breath of Fresh Air*, and the multi-media educational package of the same name (which received the Geographical Association's Highly Commended Award in 2002). He negotiated the 2001 Environment Charters between HMG and the Overseas Territories. In all these activities, he worked closely with UKOTCF, leading to several years of very successful collaboration between governmental and NGO bodies – including securing FCO financial support for the seabird restoration project on Ascension Island. In 2000, he set up FCO's Biodiversity Team, and helped UK negotiate protection for the Basking Shark and oppose the resumption of commercial whaling. He managed project funds of £1m pa, including UK support for the Great Apes Survival Project, and was member of the UK World Heritage Committee.

His career in FCO (1968-2002) had a strong China focus, and Iain speaks and reads Chinese. His overseas postings included China (Beijing, Hong Kong and Consul-General Shanghai 1987-1990), Dublin, Wellington and Accra. In UK Embassy Beijing 1971-4 and later in London, he negotiated several zoological exchanges as well as political links. As Deputy Political Adviser in Hong Kong (1978-81, when Hong Kong was still a UK Dependent Territory), he negotiated new air, ferry, train and road services with China; and the resettlement overseas of boat refugees from Vietnam, as well as helping to launch WWF's Hong Kong branch.

After retiring from the UK Diplomatic Service, in 2002 Ian established BioDiplomacy, a diplomatic/environmental consultancy, whose roles have included arranging visits for environmental TV teams from China. His island interests include being a Director of the Global Islands Network, and a member of the International Small Islands Studies Association, the IUCN islands taskforce, and the advisory council of the World Land Trust.

Iain is keen to continue to contribute his skills to conservation in the UKOTs through political analysis, reporting, negotiating and networking across governmental, commercial, academic, and campaigning contacts. These skills have been deployed effectively on developing and presenting evidence to House of Commons Select Committees, amongst other roles.



Dr Mike Pienkowski (Chairman, UKOTCF)

Mike served previously as UKOTCF Chairman 1995-2009 and Honorary Executive Director 2009-16. He believes that the Forum's main challenges are: to help its territory partners both to secure local understanding of the value of wildlife and heritage and to conserve this; to raise awareness in UK and achieve a proper level of funding from UK Government for conservation in UK territories; and to secure adequate resourcing for the work of UKOTCF and its partners. Tremendous progress has been made in these areas but much remains to be done. He considers that, to achieve this, UKOTCF needs to remain engaged with its member organisations at all levels from policy to on-the-ground projects. To this end, Mike donates most of his time to running the organisation on a voluntary basis.

He has been involved in research and conservation for over 50 years, and in UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies for over 20 years. Early research and conservation work was on waders (shorebirds): organiser and leader of the Cambridge-London Iceland Expedition 1970, the University of East Anglia (UEA) Expedition to Morocco 1971, and the UEA Expedition to Tarfaya 1972, to study migration systems and conservation requirements of coastal birds; joint organiser, scientific co-ordinator and leader of advance party and base-camp team for Joint Biological Expedition to NE Greenland 1974; Chairman of international conference in the Ukraine in 1992, resulting in the Odessa Protocol on international co-operation on migratory flyway research and conservation.

He has worked in: **applied research** (e.g. Durham University 1973-1984; Executive Editor of the *Journal of Applied Ecology* 1994-9); **governmental conservation** (e.g. Head of Ornithology Department and Assistant Chief Scientist of the Nature Conservancy Council 1984-91; Head of the Implementation Team (1990-1) and first Director of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee 1991-5; amongst other initiatives: established and managed the successful programme to re-introduce red kites to England and Scotland; Co-Chairman of international conference on lead-poisoning in wetlands, Brussels 1991; and Chairman of UK Government's group to end the use of gunshot lead in wetlands); and **the voluntary sector** (e.g. Head of International Legislation & Funding Department, RSPB 1995-1997; Director, European Forum on Nature Conservation & Pastoralism 1998-2001; and voluntary roles as Vice-President & Council Member of the British Ornithologists' Union (1991-2003), WWF-UK, Member of Programme Committee (1992-2002) Council of the British Ecological Society (1993-1999), Council of Wetlands International (1988-1998), member of Environment Committee of the Institute of Petroleum (1994-5), Vice-President, Advisory Committee on Agriculture & Environment to Directorate-General Agriculture of the European Commission (1999-2001); Member the UK Executive Committee of IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) (2006-present); Member of Expert Panel advising the Minister in the UK Department of Culture, Media & Sport on UK's Tentative List of World Heritage Sites (2010-11).

He has managed projects in support of several of the UKOTs as well as cross-territory ones, e.g. facilitator to the Governments of the Turks & Caicos Islands and of St Helena on the development of pilot strategies to implement the Environment Charters, with advice given



in this regard also to the Falkland Islands, Ascension, Pitcairn, Alderney and others; and undertaken some commissions, for example for the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. Consultant to UK Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to review actual and potential Ramsar Convention Wetlands of International Importance in UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies (2004-5); Expert consultant to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (e.g. Ramsar Advisory Mission report 46: www.ramsar.org/ram_rpt_46e.htm) (2001-2).

External Examiner, University of Durham BSc degrees in Environmental Sciences (1995-1999); higher degree examiner or consultant for the Universities of Simon Fraser (Vancouver), Cape Town, Durham, Anglia and Wales.

Bill Samuel (Treasurer)

Bill Samuel serves as the Treasurer of UKOTCF. He is a chartered accountant, born and brought up in Surrey. He has lived and worked in Copenhagen, Nairobi, Bahrain, Farnham and the Turks & Caicos Islands, initially as an accountant but then as an entrepreneur in tourism development and an investment banker. More recently he has been a consultant in tourism and financial services with assignments including Strategic Reviews in the Turks and Caicos Islands and Anguilla, commercial consultancy for the Government of St Helena and restructuring the Turks and Caicos Tourist Board. He was UK Representative of the Turks & Caicos Islands Government from 1996 to 2004.

He joined the board of his family's company, Foyles Bookshop, in December 1999, where he helped plan and oversee a major renovation programme. He is also a Director and Secretary of the Foyle family's property company Noved Investment Company.

He is divorced with three adult children, an adult foster son and eight grandchildren. His hobbies include sailing, scuba diving, skiing and photography. He is an active supporter of Amnesty International and cares deeply for human rights. He is a Director of The Booksellers Association and Chair of one of its subsidiaries Batch UK Ltd., and on the Finance Committee of Minority Rights Group. He lives in London and Northants.



Martin Spray CBE

Martin has been Chief Executive of the UK-based Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) since 2014. His career has been divided between the government sector and conservation NGOs. Upon graduating from University of Swansea with a degree in Zoology, he joined the Science Research Council in London as the Secretary to the Solar Systems Committee. Although not reflecting his interests until then, he found the experience extremely stimulating. He then went on to several and varied managerial roles with the re-named Science & Engineering Research Council, including a period of secondment to HM Treasury in Whitehall.

Having pursued his childhood interest in the natural world since childhood through voluntary work raising money for Greenpeace and WWF as Chair of their support groups, he joined WWF UK. In his role as Area Manager, he merged successfully the South East



England and London regions and oversaw PR and fundraising through 84 volunteer groups and major events, raising over £1 million for conservation in his last year. Three years later, he was approached to become the first Chief Executive of the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT). Then a very small but respected naturalists' trust, it is now one of the largest Wildlife Trusts in the UK. During his 12 years with BBOWT, Martin took on various other commitments, including Chair of the 48-strong North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners, and Chair of the Oxfordshire Conservation Forum. In 2003, He was seconded from BBOWT part-time to oversee the re-structuring and stabilising of the national Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts for a year, culminating in his involvement in the appointment of a new CEO.

His period with WWT has seen a growth in the organisation to over 200,000 members, an income of £24 million, major refurbishment and improvement of its 9 wetland visitor centres, a shift to a new strategic direction involving wetland creation and management to benefit people, and a growth in the organisation's international activity.

In 2013 Martin was awarded the CBE by HM The Queen, and an honorary Doctor of Science by the University of Roehampton for services to nature conservation.

Kathleen McNary Wood

Kathleen is an environmental scientist, with specific expertise in tropical and sub-tropical ecology and 25 years' experience in environmental impact assessment and related disciplines. Working extensively in Florida, the Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos Islands, Kathleen is a native Floridian, who has been working and living in the Caribbean region since 1990. Her life and professional experiences have focused specifically on confronting the resource and capacity limitations of small-island developing states.

Often overseeing groups of consultants from disparate disciplines and cultural backgrounds, Kathleen has conceived, designed, managed and conducted research in all environmental disciplines. Her professional experience includes managing and conducting baseline ecological assessments, classifying and mapping terrestrial, wetland, coastal and marine habitats, preparing comprehensive environmental impact assessments, developing environmental education programmes, advising on environmentally sustainable development and working in association with private and public sector entities to develop environmental partnerships, legislation and policy.

Most recently, she completed a two-year contract as the Turks and Caicos Islands' Director of the Department of Environment and Maritime Affairs (DEMA), the country's agency charged with oversight of protected areas, fisheries, coastal and wetland management, management of all natural resources and maritime affairs. During her tenure as the Director of DEMA, she managed a team of 25 enforcement, scientific, education and administrative professionals, with an annual operating budget of approximately US\$3 million. She also independently raised approximately \$1.5 million in funding for conservation initiatives. In addition to her scientific and management proficiencies, she is an accomplished author and editor, with numerous publications on the natural history



<p>of the Bahamas, Ambergris Cay, Turks and Caicos, and Snake River, Wyoming.</p> <p>In association with Harvard University, Kathleen developed and is now implementing a multi-criteria environmental evaluation model, which combines remote sensing, rapid ecological assessment, GIS mapping and data analysis. The model is being field tested on East Caicos, the largest uninhabited island in the Caribbean. Methods are standardized, inexpensive, easy to implement and specifically suited to the limitations of small-island developing states (SIDS).</p> <p>Kathleen is currently working as an environmental consultant, focusing on promoting understanding of the relationships between human culture and the environment and fostering the momentum for paradigm shifts that will be required to ensure resilience in a climactically challenged world.</p>	
Other Officers	
<p>Catherine Wensink (Executive Director, UKOTCF)</p> <p>Catherine holds a BSc in Zoology from Queen Mary College University of London and an MSc in Conservation Biology from Manchester Metropolitan University. She has studied marine invertebrates, herbivores in Kenya and the management of protected areas in Tanzania. She has worked for the Environment Agency in the UK and for the World Conservation Union IUCN Office for Europe in Brussels, where she was involved in the organisation of the important conference in Paris in 2006 on Biodiversity in European Development Cooperation – which involved a strong element on Overseas Countries and Territories. Catherine has worked for UKOTCF since 2007, initially on short-term projects, then as Co-ordinator and later as Manager & Senior Conservation Officer, before her present appointment While still undertaking her UKOTCF role, Catherine spent 2011 in Bonaire, Dutch Caribbean, assisting local NGOs there while improving her Dutch. Catherine has two small children and enjoys teaching them about the environment.</p>	
<p>Ann Pienkowski (Honorary Environmental Education Co-ordinator; Secretary Wider Caribbean Working Group)</p> <p>Ann holds a BSc in Biological Sciences from the University of East Anglia, and a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education from the University of Durham. She has participated in research on shorebird migration at Durham University, on a project led by the late Professor Peter Evans, and research on curriculum development at Moray House College of Education, Edinburgh. Ann worked as a primary school teacher in Peterborough from 1986 until her “official” retirement in 2010. Combining her interests in ecology and education, she voluntarily took on the role of Environmental Education Co-ordinator for UKOTCF in 2006, and has worked particularly with partners in the Turks and Caicos Islands but also elsewhere in the UKOTs/CDs to develop environmental education resources. Ann’s other interests include ski-ing, walking and video photography.</p>	

Dr Nicola Weber (Conservation Officer; Secretary Southern Oceans Working Group)

Nicola holds a BSc in Marine and Environmental Biology from the University of St Andrews and an MSc in Biodiversity and Conservation from the University of Exeter. She completed her PhD in 2011 which examined social interactions of the European badger and their implications for the transmission of bovine tuberculosis. Immediately following this, she moved to Ascension Island with her husband to study the green sea turtle population there, with Ascension being the second largest green sea turtle nesting rookery in the South Atlantic. They stayed there for 5 years; taking over the running of the Ascension Island Conservation Department in 2013. During this time, they implemented a number of changes, including the creation and implementation of the first Biodiversity Action Plan for the Island, Protected Areas and Wildlife Protection legislation, and a vibrant marine conservation and research programme. They left at the start of 2017 to raise their young family in the UK for a while, but are still actively involved in work on Ascension Island through Darwin Plus and BEST grants.

Nicola is very happy to have the role of Conservation Officer for the UKOTCF and to remain involved with the Southern Oceans UKOTs, and is also excited to expand her involvement with and knowledge of the other UKOTs, in particular those in the Caribbean where she has previously worked on sea turtle conservation programmes. You can view more about her research here:
www.researchgate.net/profile/Nicola_Weber



Dr Wylie Horn (Conservation and Information Officer)

After graduating with a BSc in Ecological Science from Edinburgh University, Wylie worked as an RSPB warden for several years in Strathspey, Shetland, and the Somerset Levels. Following that, he worked on the *Seabirds and Sandeels* project for the Applied Ornithology Unit at Glasgow University, studying the breeding failure of surface-feeding seabirds in the Shetland Islands. This led to him to studying for a PhD, looking at the feeding behaviour of breeding Arctic and Common Terns on Coquet Island, Northumberland, UK.

He worked as a film library researcher for Oxford Scientific Films in the mid-Nineties, and then in a variety of IT roles at the University of Oxford for 19 years, supporting a very wide range of IT services for the collegiate University. In 2013 he formed his own IT consultancy.

Wylie was appointed in 2017 as part-time Conservation and Information Officer for UKOTCF.



Eleanor Comley (Conservation Assistant, Secretary Wider Caribbean Working Group)

El holds a BSc in Biology from the University of Sheffield and is a Volunteer Learning Assistant Intern for the RSPB. El enjoys sharing her love for nature with those around her which has led to a number of Science Communication roles in such projects as the RSPB's Big Schools' Birdwatch and the University of Sheffield's Outreach programmes. She also teaches physical outdoor activities through her employment as an Activity Instructor in Sheffield. El is interested in wildlife conservation, specifically tackling poaching through practical conservation methods and wildlife protection laws.

In 2016, El participated in research for Carnivore Research Malawi and African Bat Conservation, where she gathered spatial and behavioural data on spotted hyenas and identified the bat species present in the city of Lilongwe and Liwonde National Park. While working in remote villages to improve the perception of carnivores, she gained an appreciation for the complexity of the issues that surround protecting wildlife whilst also respecting cultural beliefs. El hopes to start tackling some of these problems through her Master's degree and aims to focus on community engagement techniques.

As a Conservation Assistant for the UKOTCF, El is responsible for creating some of the online Virtual Tours of the Overseas Territories and also acts as Assistant Secretary Wider Caribbean Working Group. In her spare time, she volunteers for the Moors for the Future Partnership in the Peak District and is a Cub Leader for the Scout Association.

Susie Phillips (Conservation Assistant; Secretary Europe Territories Working Group)

Susie is a recent graduate, studying Conservation Biology and Ecology at the University of Exeter. With a range of voluntary experience built up before and during her studies, she has worked on a number of projects with the Wildlife Trusts and been an active member of Chester Zoo for some time. While at University, Susie ran *Expeditions*, the Expedition Society for the joint universities of Falmouth and Exeter, giving support to students who wanted to organise conservation-focused expeditions around the world. Through this role, Susie was also part of an expedition to Madagascar in 2014 – *Project Loholoka*, which focused on surveying a small forest in the south-east of the Island. Since graduation, Susie has taken on a number of voluntary positions with Cheshire Wildlife Trust, The Entomology Department of the World Museum in Liverpool, and Conservation Assistant with the UKOTCF. In this current role, she is assisting with virtual tours and taking on the role of Secretary for the Europe Territories Working Group.



Avishka Sendanayake (Environment Assistant)

Coming from an island state in the Indian Ocean, Avishka left Sri Lanka in 2012 to study abroad, which led her to study her BSc in Sustainable Development at Kingston University. She has a keen interest in wildlife, conservation and all sustainability issues. This interest has led her to read for an MSc in Climate Change and Sustainability at Brunel University, where she is involved in various volunteering activities and salsa dancing.

She has been involved in volunteering activities throughout her time at University since 2012. She was a regular volunteer for the Riverfly Monitoring Partnership that was working with the Kingston University Biodiversity Action Group. She is currently a volunteer for the Hillingdon Group of the London Wildlife Trust and she is also a volunteer nursery gardener at Osterley Park.

She was an International student ambassador in Kingston University for one year, and was also an ambassador for the Low Carbon Entrepreneur Competition organized by the Mayor of London. She attended and participated at the COP 22 of the United Nations Conference for Climate Change in 2016 which was held in Marrakech, Morocco. During this experience, Avishka, who was a member of the Angola Delegation, was involved in the discussion with the Least Developed Countries regarding their mitigation plans against Climate Change.

Conservation has always been a strong passion of hers, which is why she chose to study conservation modules during her undergraduate and her postgraduate studies. Furthermore she completed her dissertation on coral reef conservation in Sri Lanka, which is a personal passion of hers.

Dr Keith Bensusan (Chairman, Europe Territories Working Group) is from Gibraltar. He is a council member of the Gibraltar Ornithological & Natural History Society (GONHS) and is the head of its Invertebrate Section. He is also Director of the Gibraltar Botanic Gardens and an environmental consultant with Wildlife (Gibraltar) Ltd, the company that manages the gardens.

Keith has had a lifelong interest in birds. He began birding at a very early age and his interests eventually diversified to other aspects of natural history. This led him to read Zoology, to take an MSc in Biodiversity and Conservation, and finally a PhD on the ecology of migrant and resident birds around the Strait of Gibraltar. Apart from bird migration and ecology, Keith also has an interest in plants and is a keen entomologist, having worked on faunistic and taxonomic studies on a range of groups. He has published on all of these subjects. His responsibilities at the Gibraltar Botanic Gardens include management and data-basing of collections, and his consultancy work includes monitoring of terrestrial sites listed under the EU Habitats Directive.

Keith has an ever-growing interest in the wildlife of the UK Overseas Territories and its conservation. He finds the parallels and differences between the territories fascinating and believes that interchange of views, ideas and experiences via the Forum is an ideal way of tackling conservation problems effectively. Following some years as Secretary of ETWG, Keith took over the Chair in 2014.



Advisers

Dr John Cortés MBE

John Cortés was elected to Gibraltar's Parliament in December 2011 and serves as the Gibraltar Government's Minister for Education, Heritage, Environment, Energy & Climate Change. Until 2011, he was General Secretary of the Gibraltar Ornithological & Natural History Society (GONHS), a post he had held since the creation of GONHS in 1976. He was last elected to the post in 2009. Until 2011, his employment was as Director of the Gibraltar Botanic Garden, a post he had held since 1991. He was also an environmental consultant with Wildlife (Gibraltar) Ltd. He gained a D.Phil at the Animal Ecology Research Group, Oxford, in 1983.

John has long been involved with UKOTCF, and served on its Council from 2008 to 2014, before becoming an Advisor to Council. John has extensive experience in ornithology, ecology, natural history and conservation, having authored, edited and lectured on these subjects. He is, or has been, a member of numerous organisations, including the Gibraltar Development and Planning Commission, the Gibraltar Heritage Trust, the Institute for Campo-Gibraltarian Studies and the Park Authority of the Parque Natural de Los Alcornocales in Spain. Between 2003 and 2008, he directed a European Union Interreg Project in Gibraltar/Morocco. He has wide experience in lobbying and campaigning, having been instrumental in achieving Gibraltar's Nature Protection Act and the creation of an Environment Ministry in Gibraltar. He is experienced also in working within or with both NGOs and Government bodies.

Between 1983 and 1991, John was a civil servant, attaining the post of General Manager of the Gibraltar Health Authority where he gained experience in public administration, management and handling large budgets. He is a Justice of the Peace, and was elected President of the Gibraltar Magistrates' Association in 2009. John was awarded an MBE for services to ecology and conservation, and is an accomplished director and actor in amateur theatre. John would like to continue to use his varied abilities in furthering the conservation of nature in other territories.



Dr Tom Appleby

Born in Bristol but growing up on the coast of South Devon, Tom is a former commercial lawyer and now legal academic specialising in marine and conservations issues. He is an associate professor in law at the [University of the West of England](#) and has published extensively on the mechanics of fisheries management and marine conservation. He is a member of the [international water security network](#). Tom's work has been used by a number of NGOs, governments and other organisations to promote conservation measures which enhance the local environment while promoting sustainable livelihoods. A short film relating to one of Tom's most recent publications can be found at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qsoi4TMq5bA.

He helped to set up the Lamlash Bay Marine Reserve in waters adjacent to the Isle of Arran in Scotland and is an active trustee of the [Community of Arran Seabed Trust](#). Tom is also a trustee of the [Blue Marine Foundation](#) and is working a number of projects in the UK Overseas Territories and elsewhere in UK waters.



In his spare time, Tom is a keen sailor and has sailed across the Atlantic.

Sarah Barnsley

Sarah was a Conservation Officer with UKOTCF from October 2014 to June 2017, and very much enjoyed learning about the conservation work in the UK's Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies. During that time, Sarah was part of the conference team for UKOTCF's *Sustaining Partnerships* conservation conference held in Gibraltar. She also helped to draft a submission to an Environmental Audit Committee inquiry and worked on a review of Territories' progress towards Commitments listed under the Environment Charters and under various international conventions. As Secretary of the Southern Oceans Working Group, and standing in temporarily as Secretary of the Europe Territories Working Group, Sarah has been involved with writing newsletters, organising meetings, and acting as the first point of contact for these networks. She has worked also towards the development of Virtual Tours for Ascension Island, Jersey, and Alderney.

In May 2016, Sarah visited Montserrat for the first time, where she was involved with the setting up of a Darwin Plus-part-funded project. In 2016, she attended the Inter-Islands Environment Meeting in Guernsey. It was great to hear about all of the projects in the Crown Dependencies – from new Protected Area designations, to the many environmental education opportunities available to students. She also had the opportunity to visit Herm Island and the newly designated Ramsar Site. More recently, Sarah helped provide support for the 2017 Environment Ministers' meeting in Alderney.

Sarah has now left to complete a PhD at the University of East Anglia which will be looking at improving pollinator habitats in farming landscapes. However, she will definitely be keeping in contact with UKOTCF and all of the work going on in the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies.



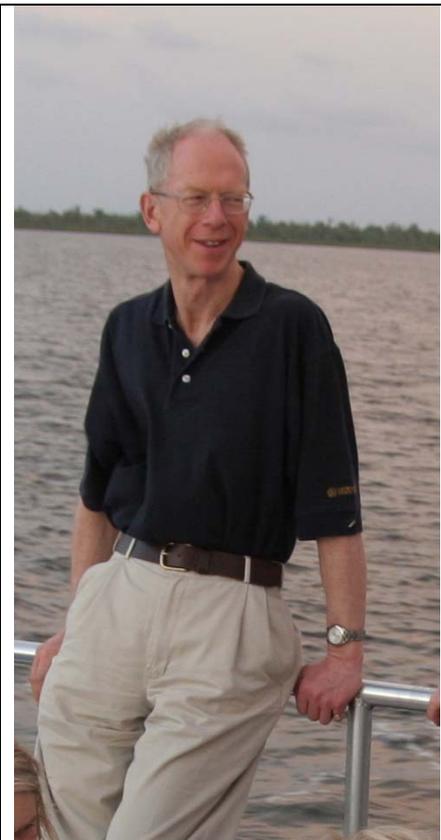
Bruce Dinwiddy CMG

After being elected to Council in October 2006. Bruce took over from Michael Gore as Chairman of the Wider Caribbean Working Group.

Bruce was previously Governor of the Cayman Islands (2002-05). His interest in environmental issues dates from his time as Overseas Development Institute Fellow in Swaziland (1967-69) and ODI Research Officer in London (1970-73). After joining the FCO, he spent two years as desk officer for Hong Kong, then Britain's most important remaining Colony. His early foreign postings were in Vienna, Cairo, Bonn and Ottawa. During 1995-98 he was Head of the FCO's African Department (Southern) and non-resident Commissioner of BIOT. He was High Commissioner to Tanzania (1998-2001) before being appointed Governor of the Cayman Islands.

While in Cayman, Bruce was acutely conscious of the delicate balance between development and environment in a fast growing small island economy. He took an active interest in environmental issues, including the Blue Iguana programme and conservation of other endangered species. In September 2004 Grand Cayman was ravaged by Hurricane Ivan, the worst storm to strike the islands in living memory. His last year as Governor was much taken up with various aspects of the recovery.

Now retired from the Diplomatic Service, Bruce is a UK Friend of Cayman and is very pleased to remain involved, through the Forum, with wider Caribbean and other Overseas Territories.

**Patricia Saxton**

Patricia Penrod Saxton is the Director of the Turks and Caicos National Museum (TCNM). She was appointed in September, 2010.

Patricia moved to Grand Turk, Turks and Caicos, in 1998 from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania USA, where she was a Sales and Advertising Executive for over twenty years. Upon arriving in Grand Turk, she realized the need for pure drinking water, and started a business: Island Pure Water. Within two years, she handed the reins of the profitable company over to her husband Neil. This allowed her to pursue a new career in helping local businesses become more profitable. She also started volunteering as a fund-raiser for the Turks and Caicos National Museum, was instrumental in establishing Rotary in Grand Turk, and was a first responder with the Red Cross. She is a contributing writer for the *Astrolabe* series in the *Times of the Islands Magazine*.

Business management is Patricia's background, with an emphasis on fund-raising for non-profit organizations. Evaluating non-profits and helping them to become self-sufficient is a challenge in which she thrives. In the USA, she was involved with Rotary International as a fund raiser, and volunteered with United Way and the Red Cross in fund-raising efforts.

Under her role as Director of the Turks and Caicos National Museum, the Museum has been able to work with the UKOTCF in establishing some of the most innovative bird-trails in the Caribbean,



and to create the Cultural and Botanical Gardens in Grand Turk, TCI.

In less than two years, she was able to cut spending and increase revenue through grants, outright donations and new tours, so the TCNM would be on track for her goal, to be self-sufficient within three years. Hiring the right people, enlisting volunteers, renting out the Museum's own facilities, and launching new self-sustaining tours have helped get the Museum back on its feet. It was a bold decision by the Board of Trustee's to enlist a "business team" to run the Museum.

Business is not the only passion Patricia has. She has always been keen on environmental issues, conservation and volunteering. Raising two sons, she instilled this mindset to both of her children. Her older son, Bryan (Naqqi) Manco, is a botanist and naturalist working for Turks and Caicos Islands Government, and her younger son, Brad Manco, is in the US Air Force in the Explosive Ordnance Division.

Patricia lives on Grand Turk, Turks and Caicos, with her beloved and patient husband Neil, and their four active large dogs. She enjoys travelling, writing, gardening, and visiting her grandchild, Mya in Tampa Florida.

Joseph Smith Abbott

Joseph Smith Abbott joined the National Parks Trust of the Virgin Islands in August 1996 as the Deputy Director/Science Coordinator. He was promoted to the directorship in December 1999 and continued to act in this capacity until 2014. Mr Smith Abbott was responsible for the overall management and planning of the territorial protected area system. He is the IUCN WCPA Vice Chair for the Caribbean and a member of the IUCN Iguana Specialist Group. He is a Chartered Manager and Fellow of the Chartered Management Institute. He has collaborated with various UK and US institutions in the identification and implementation of research needs and management approaches in order to improve protected area management in the Territory.

In 2014, Joseph was promoted to Deputy Permanent Secretary in BVI's Ministry of Natural Resources and Labour, where he is able to continue with many of his previous interests.



Dr Chris Tydeman

Chris Tydeman served as Chairman of UKOTCF from 2009 to 2013. He was Chair of Trustees of the Herpetological Conservation Trust until 2009 when it morphed into Amphibian and Reptile Conservation and he became its Treasurer. He is an independent consultant dealing with both environment and development issues, specialising particularly in recent years in wetlands management, water supply and sanitation, biodiversity strategies and climate change. He left WWF-UK as Chief Scientist, having spent 23 years there, with secondments to the WWF European Programme and WWF International, before becoming a consultant in 2001. At WWF he was responsible for the UK Conservation Programme, which included providing financial and staff support to the UKOTCF, as well as Programmes on Freshwater, Marine and Toxic Chemicals.

Chris has extensive policy experience at national, European and international levels with government, intergovernmental organisations and NGOs and has held a number of representative positions. These include being on the UK Secretary of State's Advisory Committee for the Convention on Biological Diversity; UK Government advisory groups on otters and coastal management; both the Standing Committee and the Scientific and Technical Review Panel of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention); acting as Northern co-chair of the UN Freshwater Caucus and representing NGOs at the World Water Forum in the Hague in 2000, including at the Senior Officials meetings; as head of the WWF delegation at a number of international and intergovernmental meetings including the North Sea Ministerial Conference; on the Standing Committee of European Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats; and as chair of numerous NGO bodies. He is currently a member of the EU Water Initiative Coordination Group and a number of its working groups and as a consultant is implementing the EUWI Communications Strategy. Recent assignments have included work for major NGOs in the development sector such as Water Aid, Tearfund and Oxfam as well as international conservation NGOs such as Birdlife, WWF, Wetlands International and Conservation International. He is Senior Councillor for APCO Worldwide, a global public affairs company, providing advice on Corporate and Social Responsibility mainly on environmental issues.



Dr Karen Varnham

Karen acts as Adviser to Council on Invasive Species. She formerly served on Council and jointly chaired UKOTCF's Southern Oceans Working Group. Between 1998 and 2008, Karen Varnham worked as a self-employed invasive species biologist, specialising in eradicating rats from small islands, and producing reports and desk studies on various aspects of invasive species issues. In May 2008, she began a PhD at the University of Bristol, investigating the impacts of rats on island ecosystems. She is a member of the IUCN's Invasive Species Specialist Group and also serves on the committee of Cornwall Mammal Group.

Karen has extensive experience with invasive species issues, especially in small island nations such as Mauritius, Antigua, St Lucia and Malta, as well as in many UKOTs. This has given her an understanding of the challenges facing conservation work in small and often remote countries, much of which is relevant to the UKOTs. More specifically, Karen carried out an in-depth review of non-native species in the UKOTs and Crown Dependencies for the JNCC, producing a report and a database published in 2005. This involved sourcing and reading a great deal of grey literature, as well as contacting and communicating with key people living and working in the UKOTs and CDs. Karen has also worked with many of the Forum's current and former member organisations, including the RSPB, Fauna & Flora International and the Bermuda Zoological Society.

Karen has visited many of the UKOTs, particularly in the wider Caribbean, including running workshops on invasive species issues in Bermuda and Anguilla, and carrying out fieldwork in Montserrat, Anguilla and BVI. Outside the Caribbean, she has also worked on proposed rat eradication projects in two of the remoter territories, Tristan da Cunha and BIOT. During this time she has met and worked with many people and organisations with a role in conservation in the UKOTs, forming many good working relationships. She has attended two UKOTCF conferences, presenting her work on the non-native species database at the Jersey conference. Karen attended the Cayman Islands conference in May 2009, where she co-chaired the session on invasive species.

