INVERTEBRATES

Overall aim — *To monitor changes in populations of selected groups of invertebrates*

Rationale — The invertebrates form a large group in terms of species richness and many of them pose difficult problems for long-term monitoring: sampling for many groups is labour intensive, identification difficult, time-consuming and therefore expensive. However, some groups are ubiquitous, are more readily sampled and identified, and are known to respond to changes in climate, pollution and land use (eg Luff & Woiwod 1995); moreover, in some cases there are already good biological, physiological or ecological data, often from long-term studies, which can provide a background to interpretation. A general policy in considering suitable invertebrate groups for ECN sampling has been to concentrate principally on indicator groups rather than on individual species, and wherever possible on groups where monitoring schemes already exist. It was desirable to include examples of both herbivores and predators, as well as some populations exhibiting genetic variation, particularly where an environmental link is known. Practical considerations of the availability of expertise and of other resources have also been taken into account so that as wide a range of invertebrates as possible is being sampled within the resources likely to be available within the ECN programme.

Reference — **Luff, M.L. & Woiwod, I.P.** 1995. Insects as indicators of land-use change. In: *Insects in a changing environment,* edited by R. Harrington & N.E. Stork, 399-422. London: Academic Press.