



WHERE CAN ECOLOGY TAKE YOU?

YOUR GUIDE TO A
CAREER IN ECOLOGY

Where can ecology take you?

Ecologists study the interactions of living things and their environment, providing new understanding of these systems as they are now and how they may change in the future. A career in ecology can mean many different things – this leaflet gives you an introduction to just some of the exciting opportunities on offer. Please get in touch if you would like any further information.

Scientific Research

Ecological research covers a range of exciting topics, from detecting and monitoring protected animals to understanding how climate change might affect the distribution of species. As a researcher, the work available to you is diverse and could involve hands-on fieldwork, laboratory experiments, statistics and data analysis, and using the latest mapping and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) technologies.

Employers

Universities, UK Research Councils e.g. Natural Environment Research Council, government departments, industrial clients, environmental charities.



Photo: Michelle Tseng



Photo: Peter Britton, Degree in Photography Coleg Gwent

Conservation and Environmental Management

Our most ecologically important land needs to be carefully managed and looked after. By working for a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO), you may be the person responsible for this management. Alternatively, you might carry out the hands-on work, such as woodland management and pond digging, that maintains these valuable habitats. You may also train and work alongside volunteers, as well as carrying out species surveys, fundraising and campaigning to increase awareness.

Employers

NGOs, RSPB, Wildlife Trusts, National Trust, WWF, Greenpeace.

Policy

A government policy is a plan undertaken by the Government to achieve an objective. With a role in an NGO, you will assess current policies, develop solutions and deliver ecological expertise to the government, so that they can make informed decisions when creating environmental policies. This may involve writing and presenting reports, organising events and bringing scientists and policymakers together. Alternatively, with a role in government, you will use your ecological expertise to create and develop important policies.

Employers

Professional and learned organisations, think tanks, NGOs, government bodies, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), Natural Resources Wales (NRW).



Photo: Zdenek Macháček



Photo: BES

Science Education

Inspiring science teachers are essential for helping people understand and engage with the natural world. A career in education may involve teaching in a school or field study centre, or working for a charity or learned organisation. You may have a variety of duties, from creating learning resources, to interacting with people of all ages and backgrounds to help them understand ecology and its relevance to their lives.

Employers

Schools, field study centres, museums, learned societies, NGOs, charities.

Ecological Consultancy

Consultants work with businesses to ensure that their activities are done in a way that minimises negative impacts on the natural environment. As a consultant, you will spend time in the field conducting species and habitat surveys so that you can assess the environmental impact that any developments may have. You will also make recommendations for reducing impact and then implement these; for example, you may create new habitats or even move species to a more suitable area.

Employers

Private consultancies, engineering companies, research institutes or universities, NGOs, Wildlife Trusts.



Photo: Peter Brett Associates



Photo: M Cousins

Environmental Services

Our government has a responsibility to promote the conservation of wildlife, habitats, and landscape quality. As a result, there are a variety of roles within central and local government sectors that involve maintaining the health of our environment. Job opportunities can range from providing advice on how the environment will be impacted after a flood, regulating industry to prevent pollution, or collecting samples to interpret the condition of the environment.

Employers

Natural England, Scottish Natural Heritage, Environment Agency, government departments, DEFRA, local planning authorities, think tanks, National Parks.

Science Communication

Engaging people in ecological research is becoming increasingly important, driving the demand for creative communicators. As a science communicator, you will empower diverse audiences to interact with scientists and their research through a variety of media; from newspaper articles, blogs and TV appearances, to developing compelling events and workshops. You may also be engaged in public relations, working for organisations that depend on public understanding to support their environmental work and for presenting a good public image.

Employers

Museums, universities, publishing companies, charities, funding councils, television, radio.



Photo: The Linnean Society

The British Ecological Society (BES)

The British Ecological Society (BES) is the biggest scientific society for ecologists in Europe. We support the ecological community at all stages of their career through our journals, meetings, grants, and education and policy work. Our vision is for a world inspired by ecology, allowing nature and people to thrive.

Facebook: @BritishEcolSoc
Twitter: @BES_Careers
www.britishecologicalsociety.org

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM)

We are CIEEM: the leading professional membership body representing and supporting ecologists and environmental managers in the UK, Ireland and abroad. We work with our members to provide professional development, advise the government on policy and share best practice. Our vision is of a healthy natural environment for the benefit of current and future generations.

Facebook: @cieem91
Twitter: @cieemnet
www.cieem.net