

Policy Number	SHE-POL-02
Policy Author (s)	SHE Team
Policy Approval	APPROVED

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this environmental policy is to set out the UKCEH approach to the management of UKCEH operational environmental impacts in order to:
- manage and improve our environmental performance with respect to operational activities, including operational aspects arising from our research activities
 - protect and enhance the local environment of UKCEH sites, over which we have control
 - support the strategic environmental goals and operational environmental commitments set out in the 2030 Science Strategy: Environmental Science for a better world

2 Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to UKCEH operational sites and all UKCEH People; including employees, post-graduate researchers, contractors and other persons carrying out work on UKCEH premises for, or on behalf of, UKCEH.

3 Policy Statement

- 3.1 The UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology is an independent, not-for-profit, research institute carrying out excellent environmental science. For 70 years, UKCEH has researched, monitored, and modelled environmental change to provide strategically important research, innovation and leadership.
- 3.2 In 2010 we implemented an environmental management system to provide a framework for meeting our compliance obligations and setting objectives to continually review and improve our environmental performance. This management system is certified to ISO 14001:2015 and subject to routine third party surveillance audits.
- 3.3 Our improvement objectives, outlined in Section 4, relate to our charitable objects, taking into account our significant environmental impacts, and support our strategic research commitments to address three interconnected environmental challenges:

Building resilience in a changing climate

- 3.4 Climate change poses a significant threat to the environment, societies, and economies. The consequences are far-reaching and include rising global temperatures, extreme hydroclimatic events, and degradation of ecosystems.
- 3.5 We are committed to achieving Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions associated with our operational activities. We will continue to seek opportunities to reduce our reliance on energy derived from fossil fuels and enable our People to make climate-conscious travel choices. We recognise some form of emissions offsetting may be required in the future to continue providing excellent science to our clients.

Enhancing ecosystem and human health

- 3.6 Ecosystems are threatened by human activities, including pollution, habitat destruction, and exploitation. Ecosystems provide essential services such as a place for nature, clean air, fresh water, and fertile soil. Protecting and restoring ecosystems is therefore vital for providing the resources that strengthen ecosystem resilience.
- 3.7 We are committed to preventing pollution and minimising the environmental impacts from our operational and research activities. We will embed environmental sustainability into business and decision-making processes and lead by example in adopting sustainable practices to minimise our environmental footprint, seeking efficient use of resources and opportunities to minimise waste.

Restoring biodiversity for a sustainable future

- 3.8 Biodiversity loss is accelerating on a global scale and poses fundamental environmental, economic, and societal challenges. A rich variety of life provides environmental benefits that are threatened by this unprecedented decline. Preserving and restoring biodiversity is crucial to ensuring a sustainable future.
- 3.9 We are committed to enabling biodiversity to thrive on sites we control. We will continue to follow good grounds management principles and seek opportunities to work with our landlords and neighbours to implement further improvement measures to support Biodiversity Net Gain.

Strategic Environmental Goals

UKCEH is committed to working collaboratively [with our People, Partners, suppliers and contractors] to:

- Reduce UKCEH reliance on fossil fuels and achieve 'Net Zero' Scope 1 and Scope 2 greenhouse gas emissions by 2040 and associated Scope 3 emissions by 2050
 - Demonstrate efficient use of resources and seek to reduce environmental impacts associated with our scientific research and from our operational activities
 - Enable UKCEH People to make climate conscious travel decisions for personal and business travel needs
 - Embed sustainability considerations within UKCEH business and decision-making processes and work towards voluntary corporate reporting in line with external Standards
 - Optimise management of UKCEH sites to enhance biodiversity and support ecosystem services
 - Actively engage our People and key Partners with UKCEH sustainability commitments
- 3.10 In order to demonstrate best practice and deliver the environmental goals, including to achieve net zero by 2050, UKCEH has assigned Executive Directors as Strategic Champions and developed supporting action plans. Progress against these is regularly reviewed by the Board of Trustees Environmental Sustainability Working Group.

4 Responsibilities

- 4.1 Our environmental management system is regularly reviewed by our Executive Committee (ExCo), reporting to the UKCEH Board of Trustee Directors, to identify opportunities to continually improve the system in order to enhance our environmental performance. Progress against our goals will be made publicly available within the UKCEH Annual Report.
- 4.2 The SHE Team is responsible for:
- ensuring this policy aligns with the requirements of ISO 14001:2015
 - producing environmental reports for ExCo, UKCEH Board of Trustees and the Environmental Sustainability Working Group, as required
 - collating and calculating environmental reporting information for the UKCEH Annual Report
 - monitoring compliance with this Policy and progress against delivering the strategic goals
- 4.3 The Executive Committee is responsible for ensuring this policy:
- aligns with UKCEH values
 - is implemented, monitored, and communicated within the organisation
 - is periodically reviewed to evaluate its continuing effectiveness
- 4.4 All UKCEH People are responsible for seeking ways to minimise any negative environmental impacts from their activities and taking action to support the UKCEH environmental goals, as supported by UKCEH management, in line with this Environmental Policy.



Stuart Wainwright, Executive Director UKCEH

MAR 2025

Policy Amendment History

Version	Date	Amendment Details	Approved By
1	Mar 2020	Initial Version	Director People & Operations
2	17 Jun 2020	Env Working Group Amendments	Director People & Operations
3	2 Jul 2020	Executive Board Amendments	Director People & Operations; Director Business & Innovation
4	28 Jul 2020	SHE Committee & Science Board Amendments	Director People & Operations
5	26 Aug 2020	Input by Benet Northcote Trustee Director	Director People & Operations
5.1	10 Sept 2020	Para 3.5 amended: EB agreed rewording as proposed by Benet Northcote and EWG	Executive Board
6	03 Nov 2022	Updated strategic goals, removed background details from challenges, added reference to strategic champions and amended SHE Team responsibilities	Executive Board
7	26 June 2023	Reissued for resigning by new CEO, Stuart Wainwright	Head of SHE
8	Feb 2025	Policy reviewed and updated in line with Ambition 2030 Strategy commitments and revised Goals to align with our ambitions and to include Partnerships	Executive Committee
8	Mar 2025	Updated Policy endorsed by Board of Trustees	Board of Trustees