



British Ecological Society

Advancing ecology and making it count

BRITISH ECOLOGICAL SOCIETY STRATEGIC PLAN 2011 – 2014

The goals of the **British Ecological Society** are to promote the science of ecology, help policy making and environmental management to be based on the best ecological evidence and principles, and communicate ecological science to the broadest public audience.

Ecology is transboundary and so the Society works at regional, national and global scales

Ecology is the study of the distribution and abundance of organisms, the interaction between organisms, the interaction between organisms and their environment, and structure and function of ecosystems.

Ecology's purpose is to provide knowledge about the way the world works and provide evidence on the interdependence between the natural world and people. A better understanding of ecological systems will allow society to predict the consequences of human activity on the environment.

Our vision is: **Advancing ecology and making it count.**

We will achieve this through:

- Developing ecological science and scientists
- Improving the quality of education and capacity building
- Promoting the use of ecological science
- Building collaborative partnerships

This plan sets out the high level strategic aims of the Society's Council for the next four years, covering our centenary in 2013. We will deliver our aims through a set of annual business plans monitored by Council.

1. Developing ecological science and scientists

We will enhance the professional lives of ecologists, the quality of ecological research and the value of our membership services. We will provide excellent services for members, thereby making membership of our Society attractive.

- 1.1 We will continue to publish high-impact journals and will develop them to attract the best international ecological research.
- 1.2 We will communicate ecological research in effective and novel ways so that information is readily available to all who wish to use it.

Our values are important

In delivering these strategic aims the BES will apply the following values:

- **Influential:** we will ensure the voice of ecologists is heard
- **Objective:** we are a science-based organisation
- **Environmentally sustainable:** the environmental impact of BES activities will become an integral part of our planning process
- **Forward thinking and innovative:** we will use creative and novel approaches
- **Collaborative:** where appropriate, we will actively seek partnerships to deliver our aims effectively
- **Efficient:** we will make effective use of our resources
- **Open:** we will listen to our members and the wider community.

- 1.3 We will champion a dialogue about ecological research in order to challenge the status quo and stimulate ecological advances.
- 1.4 We will periodically review our meetings and publications portfolios to ensure they are of high quality and relevance, and that they facilitate the sharing, disseminating, exchanging, debating, challenging and networking of ecological research.
- 1.5 We will help to create and foster the next generation of ecologists.
- 1.6 We will help ecologists respond to national and international funding opportunities and provide input into the development of such opportunities, for example, with the Natural Environment Research Council and the European Union.
- 1.7 We recognise and will develop the strategic role of our *Bulletin* as a means of actively engaging with members and as a valuable service for them.
- 1.8 We will regularly review the grants portfolio to ensure it is fit for purpose and the balance of expenditure meets the vision of the Society.
- 1.9 We will regularly review our services to members to ensure we provide the support needed by our community.
- 1.10 The primary purpose of the Centenary Celebrations will be to advance and promote ecological science and scientists.
- 1.11 The BES will promote its activities widely, ensuring it is seen as a professionally run society which performs with excellence

2. Improving the quality of education and capacity building

Enthusiastic, well-informed teaching and practical-based learning are fundamental to the future of ecological science. In collaboration with other organisations and using a range of appropriate technologies, we will seek to promote scientifically based ecological education, the development and careers of current and potential ecologists of all ages.

- 2.1 We will actively seek opportunities to influence education policy and curricula, and strengthen ecological science and associated skill sets at all levels of education.
- 2.2 We will support educators to apply ecological concepts and scientific rigour to contemporary issues in society.
- 2.3 We will support ecologists – particularly BES members – who engage with educators and young people in formal and informal education.
- 2.4 We will raise awareness of potential career paths and progression routes involving ecology at all career stages.

3. Promoting the use of ecological science

The use of high quality ecological information and increasing awareness of the natural world will help us face the environmental challenges of today and tomorrow.

- 3.1 We will be an advocate for investment in the science of ecology and its use.
- 3.2 We will be an intermediary between our membership and policymakers thereby fostering networks of interpretation and dialogue..
- 3.3 We will synthesise key knowledge on ecological issues and communicate them to non-specialist audiences.
- 3.4 We will engage with the media to represent the Society's views and facilitate accurate reporting of ecological science.
- 3.5 We will engage the public directly with ecology.

4. Building collaborative partnerships

Working with others can be more effective than working alone wherever appropriate synergies exist. The BES has much to offer collaborative partnerships as well as benefiting from them. There are many potential partners in the ecological and wider communities that could help us to achieve our vision and we will work with such partners when it is strategically appropriate.

- 4.1 In all its activities the Society will consider working in partnerships rather than working alone.
- 4.2 We will, in particular, seek collaborative opportunities in the areas of meetings, education and policy where synergies with others may be most productive.
- 4.3 We will develop and promote strategic alliances with sister societies at a national, European and global scale.
- 4.4 We will encourage and support collaborations between members and other scientific disciplines so that ecology plays its full part in addressing the scientific and social challenges of the day.