British Ecological Society

POLICY GUIDES

A one-stop-shop of reliable guides to policymaking for scientists.
Introduction and Inception Meeting: BES and CCI Symposium, 12 April 2016, 1 – 2 pm

The BES is committed to making the best scientific evidence accessible to decision makers. However, policymaking processes are rarely straightforward, and scientists can struggle to know when and how to effectively share their expertise with decision-makers. 'Policy Guides' will provide timely and accessible resources about the legislative process in the UK, EU and globally, as well as targeted information on topical policies. We aim to improve communication between BES members and policymakers, increase the impact of ecological research and support evidence-informed policymaking.

Policy Notes will:

- Provide a clear background on the fundamentals of how policies are developed and legislation is passed in the UK, Europe and globally
- Highlight the role of scientific evidence in these processes
- Provide guidance to BES members seeking to engage with policy and ultimately lead to a more informed dialogue between researchers and policymakers
- Take a neutral, unbiased stance to facilitate understanding and engagement. Resources will **not** be used to advocate particular viewpoints
- Use expert contributions and review by experts and non-experts to ensure effectiveness and impact.

The Approach

Policy Notes will be constructed primarily from interviews with experts and practitioners working in relevant fields, and backed by thorough research of policy documentation. The notes will also undergo a robust review process to ensure clarity, neutrality, quality and consistency.

Content will be developed by BES members, supported by staff, offering opportunities for scientists to develop their policy knowledge and communication skills whilst extending links with policymakers.

The notes and accompanying material will be hosted on a new section of the BES website.

1. **Core Notes:** Stand-alone publications providing explanations of key institutions and processes through which policy is formed and implemented. They will highlight the mechanisms by which scientists can engage with the policy process, for example through select committees, and all-party parliamentary groups etc.
2. **Focus Notes**: Shorter notes focussing on upcoming legislative issues. These will build on the annual BES Policy Scan, and provide more in-depth reviews of key policies and legislation of interest to the ecological community. They will target aspects of legislation that will have the largest impact on the environment, and areas where scientific input would be most valuable.
3. **Online Content:** Video and written interviews, guest blog posts and discussions on the content covered by the Notes. Experiences and perspective of working at the science-policy interface will also be covered. These will involve both policymakers and researchers, with the aim of stimulating communication and debate.

Active contribution from BES members will be fundamental to the Policy Guides project. If you would like to be involved please contact Ben Connor (below), also indicating whether you will be available to attend the meeting on **12 April** in Cambridge.

For further details please contact: Ben Connor, BES Policy Manager. ben@britishecologicalscoiety.org; Rory O'Connor, Centre For Ecology and Hydrology. rorcon@ceh.ac.uk. Beccy Wilebore, Oxford University. beccy.wilebore@zoo.ox.ac.uk.