

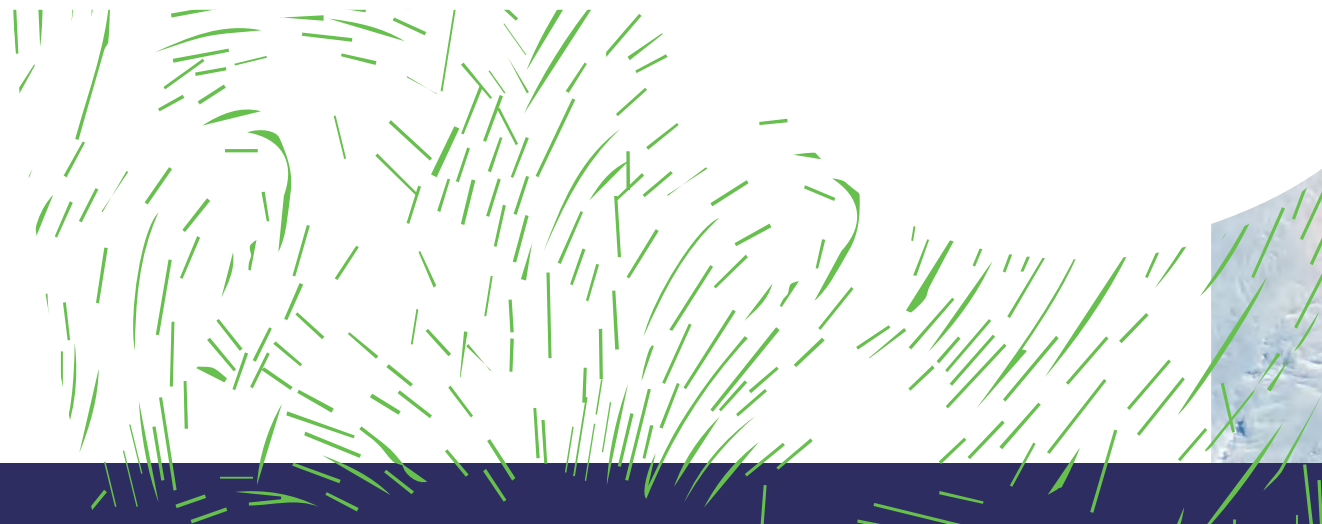
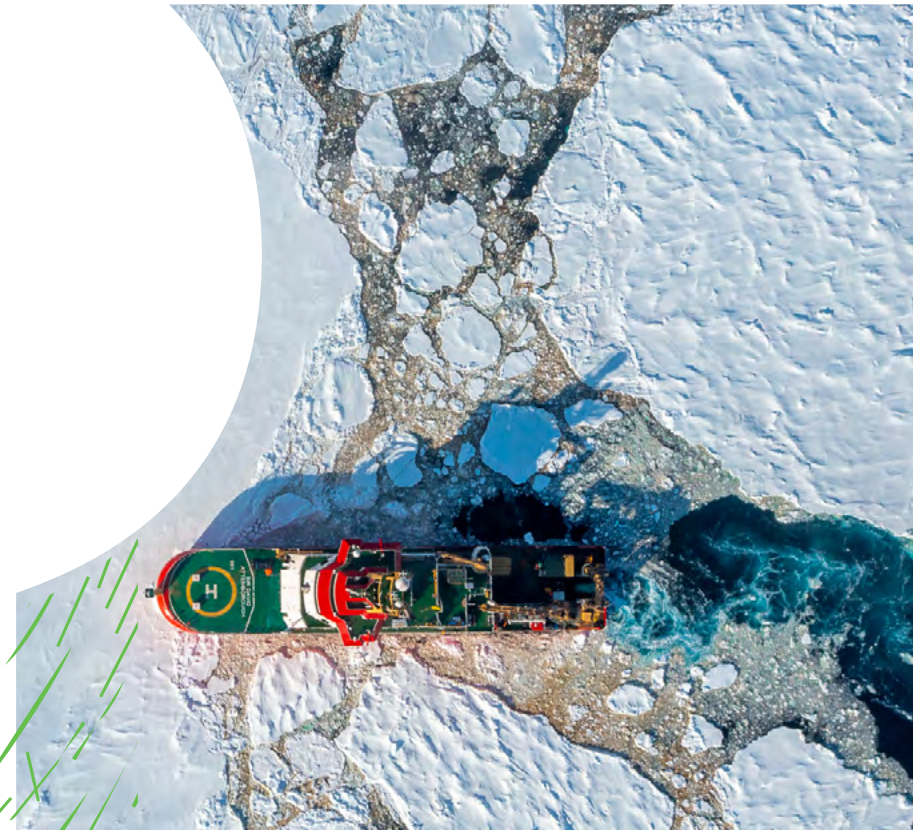
Environmental Policy 2023



NERC Environmental Policy

The Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), is the UK's main organisation for funding and managing research, training and knowledge in the environmental sciences. NERC undertakes a diverse range of research projects, tackling issues such as climate change, environmental influences on human health and the genetic makeup of life.

Working internationally, NERC operates from many diverse locations throughout the world, runs a fleet of research ships, aircraft and other infrastructure and invests in satellite technology. NERC operates with a range of partners including our wholly owned research centres, national capability partners and the wider higher education sector. This policy applies to NERC's head office and wholly owned research centres.





The [UKRI Environmental Sustainability Strategy](#) sets out that by 2040, we will:

- be 'net-zero' carbon emissions for directly controlled operations
- be 'positive for the environment' by taking a broad approach to sustainability
- 'set the standard' by using our financial power to create positive environmental change

In addition, by 2025, we will have embedded consideration for environmental sustainability across all our investments, acting upon our environmental values.

 **Collaboration**

 **Innovation**

 **Excellence**

 **Integrity**





NERC recognises the important leadership role it has in managing and promoting the principles of environmental sustainability across its investment portfolio. This is reflected under the environmental responsibility pillar of the [NERC Responsible Business Statement](#):



Carbon

- Net zero carbon emissions
- Energy efficiency
- Renewable energy sources
- Business Travel



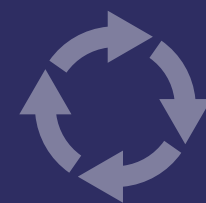
Natural environment

- Biodiversity
- Biosecurity
- Circular economy



Physical environment

- Air quality
- Water quality
- Land quality
- Climate change adaptation



Resource use

- Sourcing of goods
- Use of water
- Management of waste



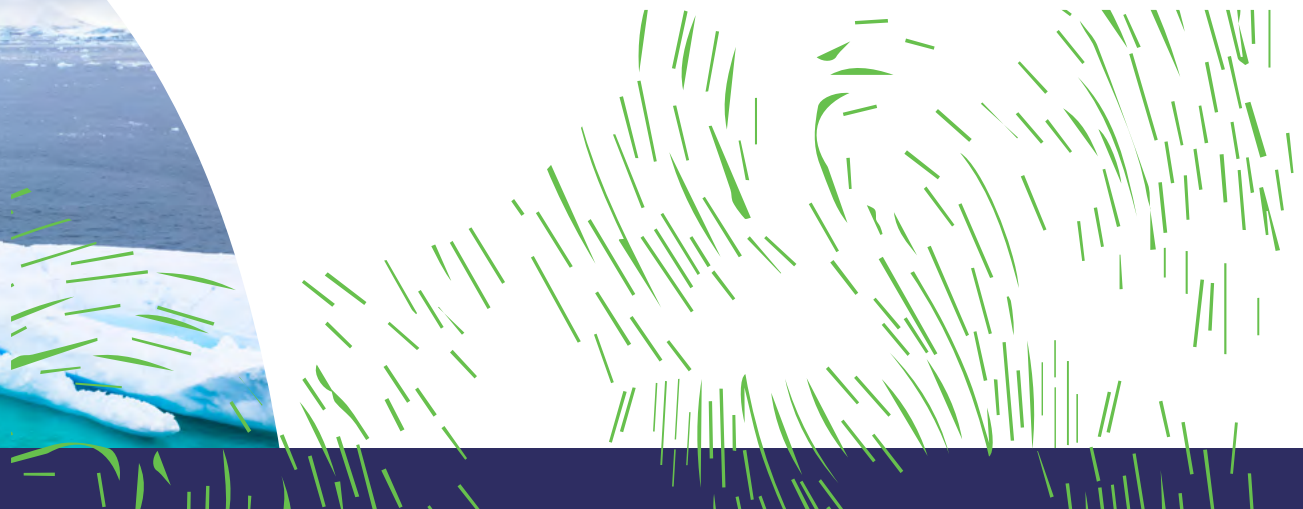
We will:

- minimise our negative impact on the environment when undertaking research and operations by embedding sustainability into everything that we do including:
 - work culture
 - strategies
 - policies
 - operational plans
 - NERC senior board terms of reference
 - science commissioning including programming, and
 - funding criteria,
- drive continual environmental improvement through ISO14001 certification at all wholly owned centres and provide central support to deliver this,
- meet the commitments set out in the [UKRI Environmental Sustainability Strategy](#),
- share best environmental practice to engage and influence our research partners, other research councils, UKRI, the wider public sector, the higher education sector and any other relevant groups,
- promote environmental sustainability through training, communication, and engagement,
- ensure that all NERC research centres (including wider national capability partners) maintain their own environmental plans which align to the UKRI and NERC environmental requirements.



We will:

- set environmental targets and then monitor and report performance against the targets to ensure delivery of objectives and the communication of any benefits,
- meet and where possible exceed environmental legal and other requirements including the [Greening Government Commitment targets](#),
- ensure adoption of the latest sustainable building practices in accordance with the UK Green Building Council to maintain our world class research facilities, for new construction we are mandated to achieve BREEAM 'Excellent' for new build projects and CEEQUAL 'Excellent' for infrastructure projects,
- maintain the Laboratory Environmental Assessment Framework (LEAF) standard at our wholly owned centres,
- ensure that all NERC research centres (including wider national capability partners) meet the environmental sustainability requirements of the NERC Estates Principles including requirements for local carbon management plans.



Specific additional commitments under each environmental theme are set out below. NERC is committed to:



Carbon

- Reducing carbon emissions from its owned assets, infrastructure, estate and business travel to meet the UKRI 2040 'net zero' commitment and meeting interim science-based targets for carbon reduction of 40% by 2024-25 and 70% by 2034-35 against a 2017-18 baseline.
- Meeting the requirements of the UKRI Business Travel, Expenses and Subsistence Policy and aiming to reduce business travel by at least 25% by 2024-25 against a 2017-18 baseline
- Purchasing and maintaining an ultra-low/zero emissions vehicle fleet.
- Maintaining the Carbon Trust Standard, or equivalent, to externally verify carbon performance.



Physical environment

- Critically assessing key pollution risks and controls.
- Prevention of pollution from its operations and activities.
- Delivering and continually improving the NERC Climate Change Adaptation plan.



Resource use

- Promoting the prudent use of natural resources and waste minimisation through effective management practices such as audits, monitoring and target setting.
- Working with UKRI, our procurement provider, government and third parties to ensure adoption of sustainable procurement principles.



Natural environment

- Managing our UK Estate to enhance biodiversity e.g. through the NERC Biodiversity Fund.
- Maintaining effective biosecurity controls where required.



NERC will review this policy annually to ensure that it is fit for purpose and reflects our environmental objectives. We will communicate this policy to NERC staff and beyond.