

2024 – 2027

STRATEGIC PLAN



Our Vision

is of a healthy natural environment for current and future generations.

Our Mission

is to benefit nature and society by raising the standards and profile of ecology and environmental management.



Our new Strategic Plan sets out an ambitious programme of work for our staff and volunteers for the next 3 years. As this plan makes clear, our ambitions are not solely focused on CIEEM as an organisation, but also on how we deliver our charitable objects in ways that strengthen the profession and in pursuit of our vision of a healthy natural environment for the benefit of current and future generations.

We have made excellent progress in recent years and this Plan builds on this by continuing to improve and expand key areas of work around, for example, membership, careers, communication, evidence-based practice and policy. We will continue to focus on our 2030 target of becoming a net-zero organisation, recognising that the steps are becoming harder but the imperative no less urgent.

We are also investing further in our work to support increasing diversity across the profession. We are very grateful for all the hard work that has gone into delivering the last Strategic Plan and developing this one. The next three years will no doubt pass very quickly and there is much to do. As a Governing Board

we are committed to making sure that the Institute is well-governed, financially stable and has clear direction in order to deliver the priorities set out in this plan. And we are confident that our dedicated and talented staff and volunteers will do all they can to meet the high level of ambition. But let's not forget that we all have a part to play in making this plan a success, because what you do in your professional roles, how you do it and how you support others is what makes the profession one that we can all be proud of.

Thank you.

Richard Handley

CEcol MCIEEM

CIEEM President



ABOUT CIEEM

The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) is widely recognised as the leading professional membership body for ecologists and environmental managers working to protect and enhance nature for the benefit of society.

CIEEM was formed in September 1991. Over the intervening years it has grown in size and stature to become a widely respected and recognised advocate of high ecological and environmental management practice standards and professional competence. This primacy was recognised by the Royal Charter awarded in April 2013. In recognition of the public benefit of our work we achieved charitable status in June 2020.

CIEEM is growing in strength and influence. The Institute now has over 7,000 members across the UK, Ireland and beyond. We encourage and support practitioners at every stage of their career to succeed in making a positive contribution to nature and society. We do this by providing advice, guidance, training, networking and knowledge-sharing activities as well as using our expertise and voice to influence effective environmental legislation and policy.

Our members share our ambition to protect and enhance nature. Through their high standards of professional practice, they are championing a sustainable environment for all. This Strategic Plan sets out how we will collectively deliver our ambition over the plan period.



OUR VALUES PROVIDE THE FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH WE WORK

Commitment

We demonstrate commitment to positive stewardship of the natural world and sustainable use of its resources.

Knowledge

We are a knowledge-based profession and we base our approach on the three knowledge principles of scientific understanding, evidence and experience.

Professionalism

We take an independent and professional approach to our work, our governance and our relationships with others.

Accountability

We expect high standards of professional practice and support all our members to achieve this.

Collaboration

We value the contributions of others and actively engage with them to achieve maximum impact for nature conservation and the public good.



CONTEXT OF THIS STRATEGIC PLAN

The past three years have been challenging, with a cost of living crisis that has created uncertainty regarding both income and expenditure.

In addition, the ecology and environmental management sector is experiencing workforce challenges creating strain on teams and individuals, and the practical measures needed to tackle the climate emergency and biodiversity crisis at the pace and scale required are lacking. The much hoped for 'green recovery' from the economic impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic largely failed to be realised.

Yet there have been some significant steps forward in other areas that are key to the delivery of our charitable objectives. The importance of having enough people with the knowledge and skills to help take forward nature's recovery has been recognised and CIEEM has been at the forefront of action to tackle this. Through our participation and leadership in national green skills initiatives and the launch of our own Green Jobs for Nature campaign, we have shone a spotlight on the importance of strategic investment in creating accessible routes into ecology and environmental management careers.

There has also been growing momentum and commitment from employers across all sectors of the industry to tackle the continued lack of diversity and inclusivity within the ecology and environmental management workforce. We have been proactive in challenging ourselves and our members to find ways in which we can remove barriers to participation and engagement. There is still much to do but through our programme of activities of allyship, knowledge-sharing, support and positive action we can continue to play a key role in championing change within the sector.

Our Action 2030 targets are getting closer. We have achieved some important gains in terms of reducing

our environmental impact but there is no doubt that it is getting harder as 2030 approaches. We are seeking expert help to identify our next steps and also to take our members on the journey with us. The next three years will be critical in terms of keeping the curve towards being a net zero organisation down as well as seeing significant changes to how our members reflect improved environmental performance in their own practice.

The environmental policy context is still uncertain. Whilst there have been some major post-Brexit legislative and policy changes across the UK there is more that is needed to halt biodiversity loss and address the climate emergency. Arrangements for new environmental land management schemes, in particular, lack clarity and there is evidence that environmental targets are being missed and environmental ambitions weakened in some administrations. Our policy work in the UK reflects our desire to hold governments to account and make sure they set and deliver against meaningful environmental targets that will make a difference. It also has to increasingly reflect and be sensitive to the divergence in approach that we see across different administrations.

Elsewhere in Europe the EU has introduced new climate legislation that sets a target of a 55% reduction in net greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and has also published a new biodiversity strategy. In Ireland action is being taken to try and implement some of the actions identified following its latest (2020) integrated environment assessment. Progress, whilst slower than needed, still seems to be moving in the right direction, providing opportunities for our members in Ireland to take forward nature's recovery.

Biodiversity net gain has just become a mandatory part of much of the development industry in England and similar biodiversity positive approaches to planning. This could be a gamechanger in terms of tackling the insidious adverse impacts of development on the natural environment but only if done well.

Having been influential in helping to introduce concepts of biodiversity net gain into planning policy approaches, we are expecting to play an active part in making sure our members and other stakeholders have the knowledge and skills to meet this challenge.

As with all aspects of professional practice, we are committed to promoting evidence-based practice and providing members with the tools to do so through opportunities for learning and knowledge-sharing. We are also committed to helping those coming into the profession develop their knowledge and skills and work in a stimulating and supportive environment.

Some of the challenges that our members face, such as adapting to and using new technologies, we also face, and over this plan period we expect to see major changes to some of our IT systems, our communications and our ways of working (such as testing the use of artificial intelligence approaches).

These challenges and commitments have been reflected in this Strategic Plan. We can summarise the key changes compared to the 2021-24 Plan as:

- Much more emphasis on improved internal (with members) and external communications. This will benefit us across all areas of our work as well as raising the profile and visibility of the profession.
- More effective member engagement, enabling us to know and serve our members and potential members better. From this we will be able to promote existing and new products and services more effectively with bespoke 'offers' for different membership groups.
- Taking action to help tackle current and forecast capacity issues in the ecology and environmental management sectors in the UK and Ireland and to build a workforce fit for the future.
- Continuing and building on our work to drive change within the sector, especially around increasing diversity and inclusion, diversifying access routes into the profession and supporting those coming into or aspiring to a career in ecology and environmental management.
- Supporting the production of more evidence-based guidance and decision-making by practitioners.

There is much to do but, with the combined efforts of our talented staff, committed volunteers and expert members, we are well placed to lead action to champion a sustainable environment.



OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

We have five equal and interlinked goals which, delivered in combination, will enable us to achieve positive outcomes for nature and society throughout the Strategic Plan period.

These goals provide the framework within which we plan, prioritise and deliver our work.

RAISE STANDARDS

Our ambition is to see the professional practice of ecology and environmental management delivered to the highest standards to deliver the best outcomes for nature and people.

We will achieve this by

- a** **Championing**
access to lifelong learning within the sector.
- b** **Delivering**
high quality, engaging and accessible professional development activities for all practitioners.
- c** **Publishing**
evidence-based guidance to support both current good practice and help the sector prepare for and respond to change.
- d** **Setting,**
promoting and upholding sector-specific standards.
- e** **Supporting**
achievement of, recognising and rewarding good practice.

- f** **Implementing**
or contributing to professional practice projects that help members deliver high quality work.
- g** **Influencing**
decision-makers, clients and employers to recognise and require high standards of advice and practice.
- h** **Increasing**
the number and championing the status of chartered members.
- i** **Celebrating**
best practice and encouraging knowledge-sharing amongst the practitioner community.

CHAMPION CHANGE

CIEEM has an important leadership role in bringing about positive and lasting change in a number of areas relevant to our work.

Creating a more diverse profession, improving attitudes to health and wellbeing in the sector and promoting inter-disciplinary understanding and collaboration are examples of positive change.

We will achieve this by

a

Promoting

awareness, understanding and valuing of the contribution ecologists and environmental managers make to the economy, the environment and to society.

b

Working

collaboratively with training providers, careers advisers and employers to increase capacity in the profession.

c

Taking

action to reach out to young people, to potential career changers and to under-represented communities to promote awareness of and access to 'nature-focused' career opportunities.

d

Promoting

diverse routes into the profession and supporting all those aspiring to a career in ecology and environmental management.

e

Championing

increasing diversity and inclusivity within the profession.

f

Raising

awareness of and implementing activity to promote health and wellbeing amongst the profession.

g

Supporting

early career ecologists and environmental managers to access high quality job and career development opportunities underpinned by good working practices.

CHALLENGE & INFLUENCE

We are facing twin environmental crises of a changing climate and increasing biodiversity loss.

Our land, rivers and seas continue to be under intense pressure from unsustainable management and development practices. At a time of political uncertainties and new opportunities within the UK and Europe, it is imperative that the voice of experienced ecologists and environmental managers is heard and that CIEEM uses its expertise to challenge and influence policy-makers and decision-makers to do better.

We will achieve this by

a

Influencing

the diverging environmental policy and legislation agenda across the UK nations, UKOTs and the island of Ireland to deliver better outcomes for biodiversity.

b

Strengthening,

through improved communications, our reputation for sound, evidence-based advice and briefings amongst key stakeholders and partners.

c

Harnessing

the expertise, evidence and enthusiasm of our members and volunteers to inform and advocate our policy work.

d

Empowering

our members to directly engage in influencing environmental policy.

e

Engaging

with the international environmental agenda to support those working elsewhere in the world to apply their expertise to best effect.

f

Forging

stronger links with other professional disciplines, NGOs and with environmental professionals both inside and outside of the UK and Ireland to create positive change for nature and communities.

ACHIEVE ACTION 2030

As a champion of action to address the interlinked environmental crises, CIEEM has a leadership role in ensuring that, through its own activities and those of its members, it is making a positive contribution.

CIEEM has declared a climate and biodiversity emergency and set a target of being a carbon neutral organisation by 2030. Whilst we do not expect to achieve this target during the lifetime of this three-year Strategic Plan, we do anticipate making significant progress.

We will achieve this by



Improving

our monitoring systems and use of credible conversion factors to ensure that we robustly measure our environmental impacts.



Continuing

to review, invest in and improve our internal systems, processes and activities to reduce CIEEM's carbon footprint.



Reviewing

and changing our internal systems, process and activities to reduce CIEEM's impact on nature and biodiversity.



Providing

and signposting to guidance to members on how to operate more sustainably.



Effectively

communicating our action in support of this agenda in order to influence others.

STRENGTHEN & IMPROVE

Success is dependent on having the organisational capacity, systems and processes to support our ambitious activities.

We are fortunate to have a talented and committed staff team, energetic and enthusiastic volunteers and a loyal membership to support our work. We need to maintain our growth and influence whilst remaining resilient and responsive to change.

We will achieve this by

a **Maintaining**
robust and transparent governance processes, including compliance with charity regulation across the UK and Ireland.

b **Increasing**
the visibility and impact of our charitable work.

c **Growing**
our membership.

d **Valuing**
and rewarding the contribution of our staff to our success.

e **Continuing**
to improve our services to maintain relevance, deliver member value and increase engagement.

f **Engaging**
with under-represented audiences to improve the accessibility and inclusivity of all our operations.

g **Recognising**
the critical contribution of volunteers, demonstrating the value of volunteering and delivering excellent volunteer management and support.

h **Improving**
our communications, brand profile, influence and impact.

i **Effectively**
promoting our products and services.

j **Improving**
our IT resource whilst embracing new technologies to streamline administrative tasks and improve resilience.

k **Managing**
our finances at a level which sustains the Institute whilst generating new income to enable more investment in activities to further our charitable objectives.

MEASURING IMPACT

The ambitions of this Strategic Plan will be delivered through the implementation of the annual Operational Plan approved by the Governing Board in March each year.

The Operational Plan will have specific targets identified. The Board will have oversight of progress in delivering each Operational Plan and there will be a mid-point review of the implementation of the Strategic Plan towards the end of 2025 so that any adjustments can be made.

Impact monitoring will be undertaken using the following methods

Increase/change in specific metrics

For example

- membership growth
- number of training courses
- social media engagement
- public engagement

Survey feedback from members and other stakeholders

For example

- brand awareness
- member satisfaction
- Influence

Working in Partnership

Much of the successful delivery of this strategy is predicated on forming successful partnerships, whether these be with our members and volunteers, employers, related professional bodies, stakeholder organisations or educational institutions.

We believe that so much more can be achieved when collaboration and working together towards a common goal is the way forward.

If you are interested in working with us to deliver some of these objectives, please do get in touch.



Raising the profile of professional ecological and environmental management and promoting the highest standards of practice for the benefit of nature and society.



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