



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

# Nature skills

Sophie Tyldesley

Green Transition Team Leader

Green Finance and Green Recovery division

# Government has provided a strong signal on its nature ambitions

- The 25 Year Environment Plan (25YEP), Environment Act, the Agricultural Transition Plan and the Net Zero Strategy set an ambitious agenda for nature's recovery in England. Relevant targets and policies include:
  - Legally-binding Environment Act targets for biodiversity and species abundance – including to halt the decline in species abundance by 2030
  - Private finance target for nature recovery (at least £500m per year by 2027 and at least £1bn by 2030)
  - 30 by 30 (30% of land and sea protected by 2030)
  - Nature Recovery Network
  - Local Nature Recovery Strategies
  - Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain
  - Landscapes Review reforms
  - Environmental Land Management Schemes
  - England Trees Action Plan
  - England Peat Action Plan
  - Natural Capital Ecosystem Assessment
  - Planning reform and acceleration of development on land and at sea (Project Speed and Energy Security Strategy)
- The 25YEP was designated as the first Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP) under the Environment Act. Revised EIP due in January 2023, which will include interim targets and how they will be achieved.

# Delivering our nature ambitions: role of green jobs and skills

Green jobs and skills are key to the delivery of Government's nature ambitions, and span across a range of sectors. E.g:

- **Land-based** – forestry, peatland restoration, other habitat restoration, sustainable agriculture
- **Finance & business** – green finance expertise, business opportunities for the nature positive economy
- **Planning / development** – delivery of planning requirements e.g. Biodiversity Net Gain
- **Water / utilities** – green infrastructure development, incorporating nature-based solutions
- **Tourism** – eco-tourism, visitor management
- **Digital / technology** – agri-tech, remote sensing, robotics, data analytics, Monitoring Reporting and Verification
- **Manufacturing / construction** – environmental management and sustainability
- **Public sector** – Arm's length bodies, local government; delivery of Greening Government Commitments and Environmental Principles
- **Education** – teachers, tutors and academics to meet the growing skills demand

**Table: Classifications of green jobs**

Green increased demand	Green enhanced	Green new and emerging
The impact of green economy activities and technologies results in:		
An increase in employment demand but does not entail significant changes in the work and worker requirements of the occupation.	A significant change to the work and worker requirements of an existing occupation.	The need for unique work and worker requirements, which results in the generation of new occupations.
E.g. ecologists, hydrologists, sustainability managers	E.g. project and programme managers, audit officers, risk analysts, financiers	E.g. Industrial Ecologists
Source: <a href="#">Occupational Information Network (USA)</a> ; <a href="#">IEMA and Deloitte 2022 Report: A blueprint for green workforce transformation</a>		

# Evidence on jobs and skills needs is lacking

- **Initial assessments on jobs and skills all identify the same challenge:** The Green Jobs Taskforce, the Public Accounts Committee, and the Environmental Audit Committee have all found that there is a limited evidence base or roadmap for the green jobs and skills needed to deliver Government's nature ambitions.
- **We need a more data rich assessment:** There is a lack of data relating to the existing 'nature workforce' so it is difficult to conduct medium to long-term forecasts, limiting our ability to understand the scale of demand and the implications arising from that.
- **This will support Government's employer-led approach:** The Skills for Jobs White Paper sets out Government's employer-led approach to skills policy, and the Green Jobs Delivery Group is acting on sector-led prioritisation of actions.

# Nature skills workshop – 12 July

- Chaired by Defra, attended by nearly 40 representatives from local government, the education sector, professional and chartered bodies, arm's length and public bodies, think tanks, eNGOs and other environmental employers to kick-start shared, concerted activity to address this lack of evidence and of an action plan.
- The workshop considered:
  - The key skills and roles needed to deliver Government's nature agenda
  - Barriers to recruitment and retention
  - Key evidence gaps
  - The best way to develop a comprehensive evidence base and related stakeholder action plan to ensure employers have access to a pipeline of skilled people.

# Green Jobs Delivery Group (GJDG)

The new central forum for industry and government action on green jobs and skills. The Group's core objectives are:

- Ensuring we have the skilled workforce to deliver climate and environment goals in line with the UK's levelling up agenda
- Ensuring workers and communities in high carbon sectors are supported with the transition in the wider context of the UK's levelling up agenda
- Better understand and address barriers to recruitment, retention and progression in green jobs (including quality of work, pay, conditions, image, etc.)
- Ensuring green jobs are open to all
- Building on the work of the Green Jobs Taskforce to develop a clearer understanding of the green economy and how to define and measure it.

Cross-cutting delivery group that includes representatives from across the economy and the skills sector:

- Co-chaired by the Minister Hands (BEIS Minister for Energy, Clean Growth and Climate Change) and Michael Lewis (CEO of EON, and Chair of the Energy & Utility Skills Partnership)
- Ministers from Defra, DWP, and DfE also sit on the Group
- Members include Kate Kennally (climate change lead at Association of County Councils); Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management; Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment; Chartered Institute of Wastes Management; Institute of Chartered Foresters; Energy Utilities and Skills Partnership; Landex; Barratt Homes; Construction Industry Training Board
- Working level links to Transport Employment and Skills Taskforce

# What does this mean for ADEPT?

- **Local involvement in the Nature Skills Working Group**
  - Helping crystallising evidence of medium- and long-term skills and workforce need, and prioritisation of action
  - Link to LA's roles as anchor institutions for local skills provision
  - Sharing of learning? E.g. linking LNRs with Local Skills Improvement Plans etc.
- **Local voice at the Green Jobs Delivery Group**
  - Green Jobs Delivery Group member - climate change lead at the Association of County Councils
  - Other members with a local delivery angle