Job Description – Evidence and Data Officer (PB5)

Job summary

Forestry England is leading a bold and innovative approach to biodiversity recovery across the nation's forests, guided by our Biodiversity Plan. We are restoring ecological function at landscape scale — reviving Sites of Special Scientific Interest, restoring ancient woodlands, expanding dynamic open habitats, reintroducing keystone species, and embracing innovation in our wild areas. We're also harnessing cutting-edge technologies like environmental DNA and bioacoustic monitoring to track and enhance biodiversity. Our ambition is to make the nation's forests the most valuable places for wildlife in England, using evidence-led solutions to reverse biodiversity loss and build resilient ecosystems.

You will lead the development and delivery of Forestry England's evidence and data systems to support nature recovery and heritage conservation across the nation's forests. This national role will be central to improving how we monitor biodiversity and ecological resilience, ensuring our decisions are informed by robust, accessible, and innovative data. You will design and implement new metrics and tools—such as biodiversity scorecards, eDNA sampling, bioacoustics, and remote sensing—to track ecosystem function and species recovery. From biodiversity monitoring to heritage asset management, you will help shape how we collect, manage, and use environmental information to guide decision-making and drive strategic outcomes.

You will champion the use of evidence in conservation decision-making, helping to embed a culture of data-driven practice across the organisation. You will also take responsibility for cleaning, managing, and integrating large and complex datasets, including heritage records, ecological surveys, and spatial data. Working closely with district teams, you will identify and resolve data anomalies, promote consistency, and support the development of national reporting tools such as Power BI dashboards.

This role will be instrumental in shaping Forestry England's approach to ecological monitoring, heritage data management, and evidence-led conservation, helping us become a leader in environmental data innovation.

Key responsibilities & accountabilities

- Develop and implement national monitoring dashboards on biodiversity and forest resilience, based on our strategic plans and targets.
- Develop and manage our monitoring of Biodiversity Plan delivery, including clearly defined Output/Outcome/Benefit monitoring.
- Manage and maintain national ecological and heritage datasets, ensuring accuracy, consistency, and alignment with organisational standards.
- Collaborate with district teams to resolve anomalies, and lead the integration of new data sources, including new surveys, Local Environmental Records Centre data, and Historic Environment Records, into internal systems.
- Lead the use of Power BI and other platforms to visualise and communicate environment team data and trends.
- Champion the use of evidence in decision-making, drawing on best practice such as Conservation Evidence reviews, and investigating whether Forestry England can become an Evidence Champion.
- Lead the integration of emerging technologies such as AI into Environment team policy and practice, to help make better evidence-based decisions.
- Lead the development and guidance of environment team data within internal GIS systems.
- Promote a culture of data integrity and innovation, helping Forestry England make better decisions through better evidence.

And any other tasks, reasonably requested by your line manager.

Skills, knowledge & experience

Essential professional and technical experience

- Strong understanding of ecological monitoring techniques and biodiversity metrics.
- Demonstrated expertise in applying statistical techniques to manage and analyse large datasets, preferable environmental, including spatial and ecological data, ensuring robust and insightful interpretation.
- Proficiency in data visualisation tools such as Power BI, and familiarity with GIS platforms.
- Excellent problem-solving and communication skills, with the ability to work collaboratively across teams.

Desirable professional and technical experience

- Experience with eDNA, bioacoustics, and remote sensing technologies.
- Familiarity with heritage data systems and Historic Environment Records.
- Knowledge of Conservation Evidence and evidence-based conservation frameworks.
- Experience in developing national reporting tools or dashboards.

Qualifications

Essential

- Degree in ecology, environmental science, data science, or related discipline, or equivalent professional experience.

Desirable

- Postgraduate qualification in ecological monitoring or data management.

Forestry England