

UKTEPoP Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategy





Rationale

Like many other innovative countries, the United Kingdom used the land and sea to develop economically and socially, but in doing so had significant impacts such as creating pollution, including greenhouse gas emissions. The impacts of short-termism have been devastating – for species, their habitats and the ecosystem services we all depend on.

Healthy, natural ecosystems are essential for life on earth and for the world economy, requiring long-term investment – if we harm nature, we harm ourselves. Across the world, ecological collapse and climate breakdown is affecting the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat, the materials we need and the medicines we rely on.

The most severe impacts are affecting, and will continue to affect, marginalised and racialised people across the world and here in the UK. Nature conservation and recovery is therefore as much a social justice issue as it is an environmental one, as much an economic issue as it is an environmental one.

JNCC has a long history of working in partnerships to support [UK citizen science biodiversity monitoring schemes](#), collecting data on a range of taxonomic groups. Partners include a range of non-governmental organisations, research bodies, country nature conservation bodies and UK governments, together comprising the [UK Terrestrial Evidence Partnership of Partnerships \(UKTEPoP\)](#). There is mutual appreciation across partners that it is essential to break down barriers to inclusion for volunteer citizen scientists who may be interested in participating in biodiversity recording, and we aim to engage in and support work that encourages inclusive outcomes for our monitoring schemes. The reasons for this are that this work may bring:

Benefits to society

The value of nature should be considered in all aspects of decision making. Supporting more sectors of society to connect to and understand the value of nature fosters an attitude of environmental stewardship. Biodiversity monitoring provides active learning opportunities that help to promote these attitudes.

Benefits to volunteers

Engagement with nature brings numerous health and wellbeing benefits to people. Providing opportunities to help different members of society engage practically with nature enables these benefits to be experienced more widely.

Benefits for biodiversity evidence

Involving a wider range of people, alongside providing the necessary training and skills, allows for increased opportunities to collect more high-quality biological data. Quality data are important for providing evidence-based advice on biodiversity conservation and recovery within the UK.

Benefits to schemes

Engaging volunteers from diverse backgrounds has benefits for monitoring schemes, including: increasing involvement of people with new skills and local knowledge; increasing area coverage across the four UK countries; and encouraging participation from younger people who can help to ensure the sustainability of data collection into the future.



UKTEPoP objectives for diversity, equity and inclusion

This UKTEPoP Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Strategy describes how JNCC, working with UKTEPoP partners, will aim to achieve the following objectives:

1. To understand and work towards decreasing barriers to inclusion in UKTEPoP monitoring schemes across demographic groups, establishing a precedent for other monitoring schemes and networks.
2. To have a collaborative approach to improving DEI within monitoring schemes.
3. To establish networks to share experiences of connecting to communities, and of developing pathways to inclusion.
4. To invite and be steered by a diversity of perspectives, working with communities to ensure our approach is appropriate and equitable.
5. To focus on high level promotion of schemes to enhance their visibility and accessibility, as well as increasing demographic representation.
6. To establish sustainable opportunities for involvement for people with a range of expertise and experience, so that we can bolster the volunteer base and enhance data collection.
7. To ensure that our work in this area promotes a culture of inclusion, trust, respect, and engagement for volunteers.

Strategic alignment

[JNCC's Strategy for 2023-2030](#) emphasises the importance of DEI in our work, explicitly stating that we will work to “reflect this at every level of the organisation”. Increasing DEI in monitoring schemes is part of JNCC’s organisational DEI strategy. JNCC aims to improve DEI in our own work, as well as providing support for our UKTEPoP scheme partners to promote and improve DEI within their work.

UKTEPoP Partners have a variety of objectives for DEI within their own organisations, reflecting different challenges and priorities. Some objectives are scheme and organisation specific, while others have relevance across schemes. JNCC aims to support collaboration and, where relevant, knowledge and resource sharing to meet mutual objectives.

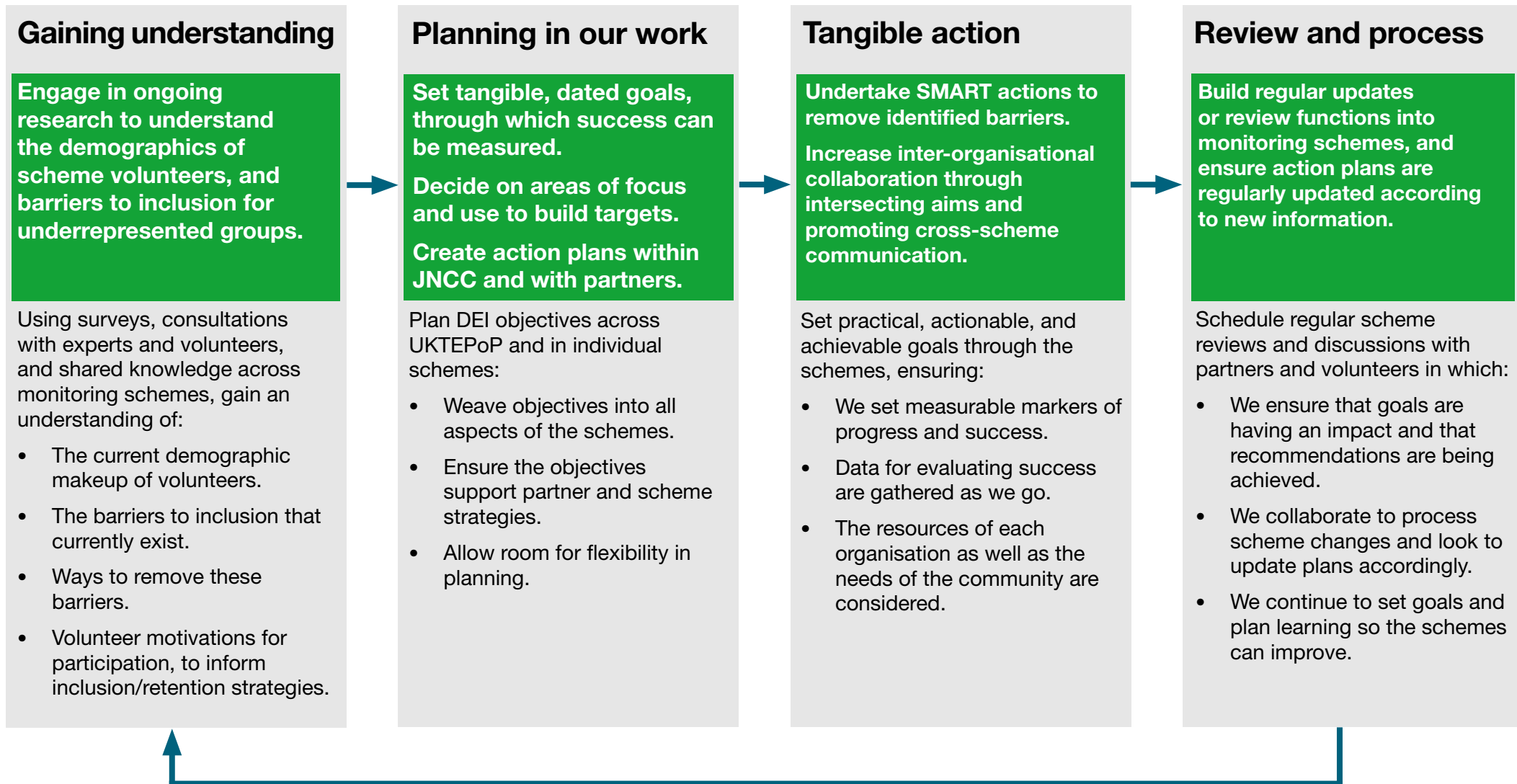
Box 1: From EDI to DEI

JNCC has previously referred to our work in this area as EDI: equality, diversity and inclusion. After recent reflection, we have decided to focus on equity as our ambition. Equality means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities. Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome. To highlight this subtle but important change in focus, we now refer to work here as DEI: diversity, equity and inclusion.

Our Plan

In order to achieve our objectives, JNCC has developed a framework to guide actions for increasing DEI across UKTEPoP schemes (Figure 1).

Figure 1: A framework for increasing DEI across UKTEPoP schemes



First steps in applying the framework:

This framework can be applied to each UKTEPoP scheme to steer work towards meeting DEI objectives. Scheme-specific plans will need to be developed with a level of flexibility, to adapt to ongoing research and discussion. However, the following points broadly set out initial steps that need to be taken:

Gaining Understanding:

- Run surveys and focus groups with citizen scientists to understand the demographics of scheme volunteers, and the motivations and barriers to inclusion for under-represented groups.

Planning in our work:

- Decide on DEI areas of focus for citizen science in JNCC, and work in partnerships to identify areas of focus for UKTEPoP schemes.
- Engage with DEI experts for JNCC, our schemes, and our partners, to bring specific expertise into our work.
- Working with partners, create scheme-specific, measurable and tangible action plans, developed using all available relevant research and resources.

Tangible action:

- Build training, workshop and championship programmes which are targeted, accessible, and appropriately advertised to potential new volunteers from currently underrepresented groups.
- Increase inter-organisational DEI work, looking at intersecting aims and goals, and promoting cross-scheme communication and collaboration. This can be done through UKTEPoP presentations, workshops, bulletins, emails and web pages, as well as encouraging discussions within schemes to identify potential collaborative work.

Ways of working:

Key to ensuring success for this strategy is creating space for all aspects of the work to be ongoing and responsive. We understand that the development of new knowledge, data, and methods across the sector can inform an adaptive approach, to ensure that we are effectively engaging with the most diverse audience possible.



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