



UK Centre for  
Ecology & Hydrology

# Science Director August 2025

Based at any UKCEH site (UK only)  
Hours: Full Time (hybrid working)  
Closes: 22 September 2025

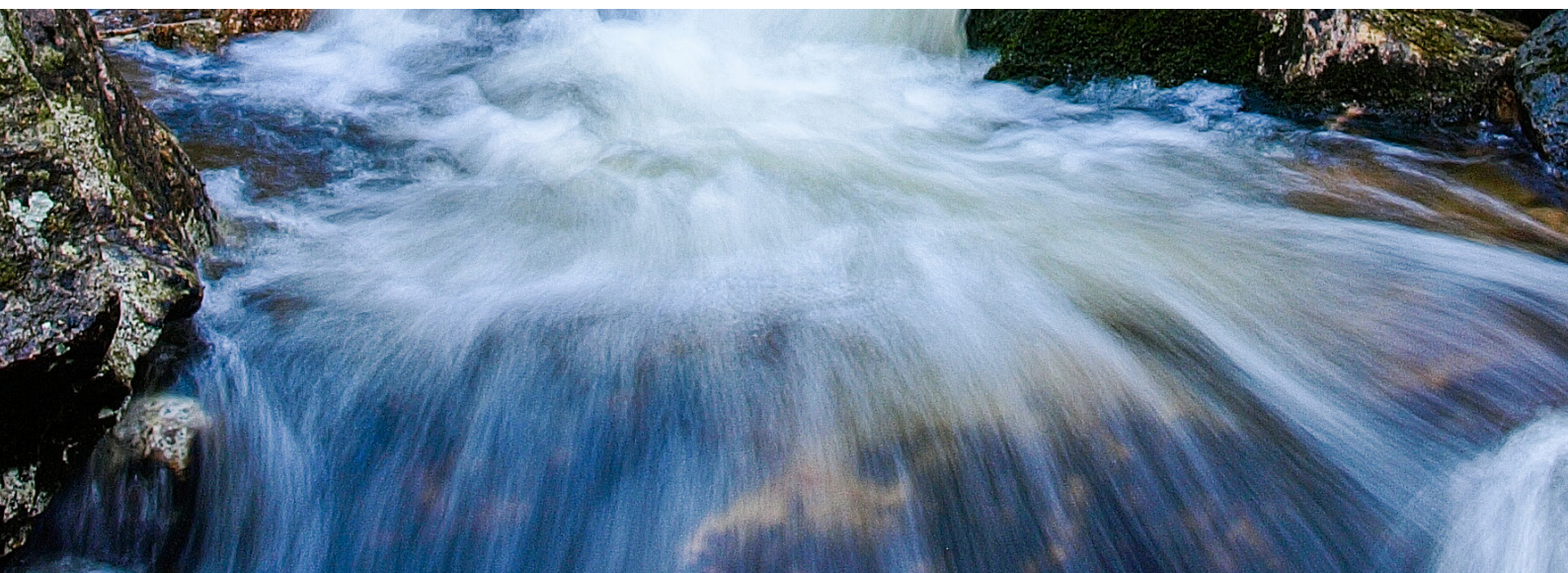


## Our ambition

To make the world a better place through science addressing climate change, promoting biodiversity, and creating sustainable ecosystems.

## Our purpose

To advance the vital environmental science that governments, businesses, NGOs, and researchers rely on to meet the great challenges of our time.



## UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH) overview

The world is facing unprecedented environmental, societal, and economic challenges, from climate change and biodiversity loss to food security and pollution. These issues are growing and threaten human health and economic stability, demanding urgent and sustained action.

The UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH) is a recognised authority in environmental research, trusted for our expertise across the land we use, the air we breathe, and the water we drink. Since our last strategy, we have expanded our capabilities and partnership, delivering the knowledge, data, and solutions governments, businesses, and researchers need to tackle the great challenges of our time.

Our five-year strategy [Environmental Science for a Better World](#) presents our ambition for the future. It outlines our commitment to meeting the increasing demand for our expertise and further enhancing our impact. Over the next five years, we will:

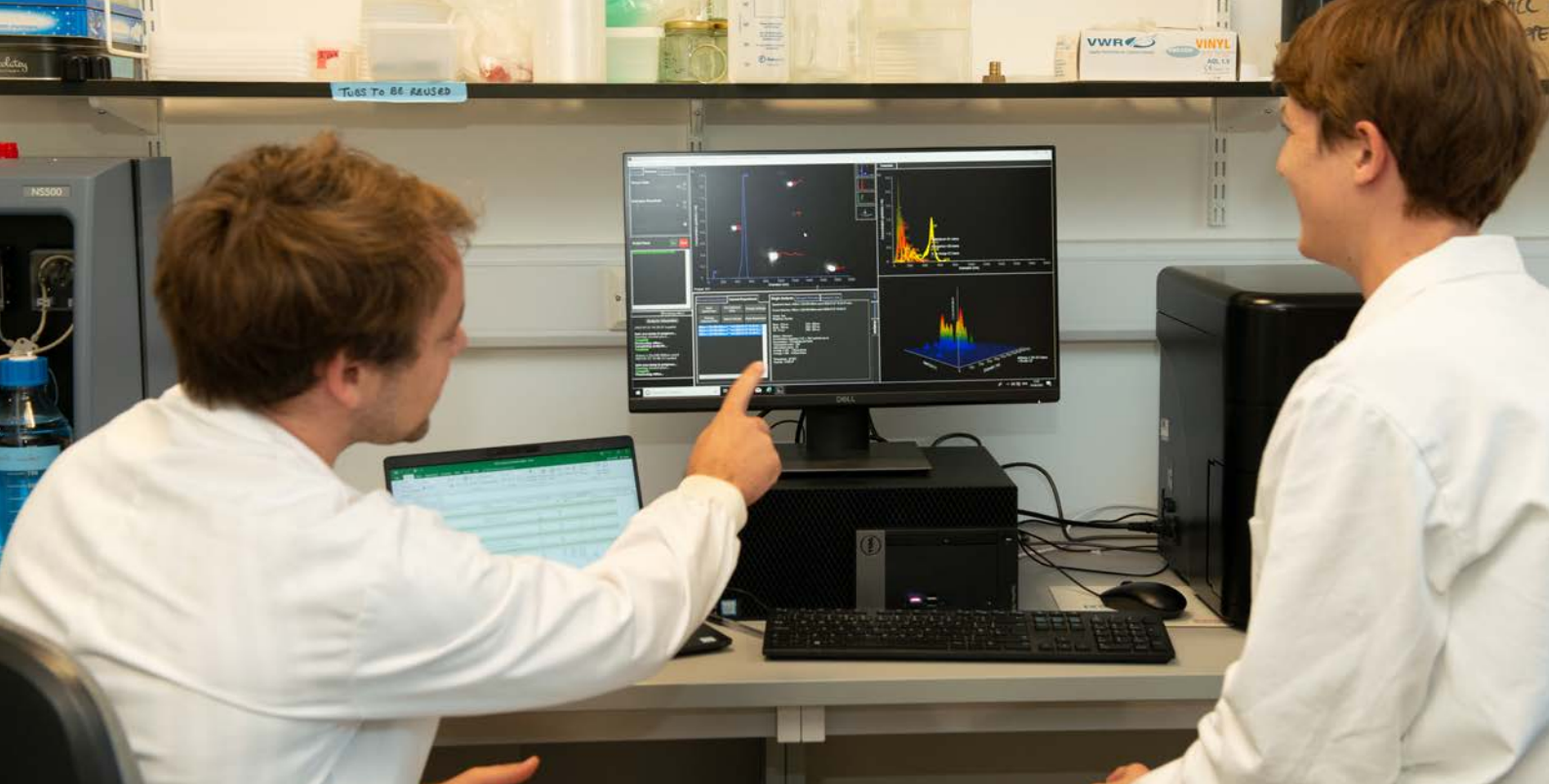
- Deliver excellent research to advance the frontiers of knowledge across the land, water, and air systems.
- Inspire collaboration with the research community to use our infrastructure, data, and skills – boosting UK research. and driving scientific advancement.
- Strengthen our role as a trusted provider of high-quality evidence and impartial advice to governments domestically and internationally.
- Partner with businesses and NGOs to benefit nature, people, and the economy.
- Combat misinformation with independent environmental research that is clear and robust.

Our work is only possible because of our expert and dedicated people. We will continue to empower them, ensuring they have the skills they need to make a positive difference.

Environmental challenges cannot be tackled in isolation. Our partnerships span borders, sectors and disciplines, benefiting all involved. Together, we can deliver the science needed to address these complex issues – enhancing the environment, boosting growth and improving people's lives.

We look forward to working with you to make the world a better place.





## The role

UKCEH is a world-leading, not-for-profit, independent research institute with over 700 staff working across every continent. Our mission is to create a more sustainable world through pioneering environmental science and data-driven insights. With expertise spanning climate, biodiversity, water, food systems and more, we combine over 50 years of scientific excellence with a deep commitment to impact.

In 2024, our income was £68.9 million, including significant strategic funding from the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) for our National Capability programme, which underpins long-term research of national and global importance.

We are now seeking a Science Director to shape and lead the future direction of our interdisciplinary science, and to ensure UKCEH continues to deliver world-class research with global relevance and reach. This is a rare opportunity to lead one of the most diverse and impactful portfolios in environmental science, at a time when scientific leadership has never been more vital.

As Science Director, you will oversee the implementation of UKCEH's science strategy, guide the evolution of our research programmes and infrastructure, and inspire over 500 scientists across multiple disciplines. You will represent our science at the highest levels—with funders, government, international partners and in the media—and play a central role in ensuring our work continues to shape the policy, practice and understanding that drive environmental change.

We are looking for an exceptional leader with a proven record of delivering innovative, large-scale research programmes. You will bring strategic vision, organisational insight and the ability to foster collaboration at every level. Experience of infrastructure development, budgetary oversight, and organisational transformation will be important, as will a values-led, inclusive leadership style. As a member of ExCo, you will bring high personal impact, sound judgement, and the ability to contribute across our broader organisational agenda.

We welcome candidates from all backgrounds and are particularly keen to hear from those whose professional or personal perspectives can bring fresh thinking to UKCEH.

## Specific responsibilities:

- Provide strategic leadership and inspiration to a community of 500 scientists, including direct line management of five Associate Science Directors.
- Deliver the scientific ambitions set out in UKCEH's five-year strategy to 2030.
- Lead the design and delivery of innovative, interdisciplinary research programmes and oversee the development of cutting-edge scientific infrastructure.
- Direct the National Capability programme, including commissioning activity and leading strategic engagement with NERC and other key stakeholders.
- Build, sustain and enhance strategic partnerships across NERC, government, academia, and other major institutions – interpreting shifts in the external environment and shaping UKCEH's scientific response.
- Guide the evolution of UKCEH's science team and capabilities, fostering world-class leadership and embedding a strategic, entrepreneurial culture.
- With ExCo colleagues, provide rigorous oversight and constructive challenge to science area business plans - ensuring a clear focus on excellence, impact, and financial resilience, whilst maintaining oversight of site-level research operations including health and safety.
- Act as a public ambassador for UKCEH's science, representing the organisation in the media and through external engagement.
- Demonstrate visible executive leadership as a member of ExCo, Chair of the Science Leadership Committee, and as a contributor to the UKCEH Board.



## Attributes:

- Inspirational, with exceptional scientific leadership skills in a discipline relevant to UKCEH's mission.
- Strategic thinker, able to shape, articulate and implement a compelling vision for UKCEH's current and future research agenda.
- Decisive and delivery-focused, with a strong record of leading ambitious, complex research programmes to international standards.
- Collaborative and inclusive, with a principled leadership style aligned to UKCEH's mission and culture.
- Proven change leader, able to evidence achieving positive organisational transformation resource and budget planning at an appropriate level and driving high-impact outcomes.
- Innovative communicator, able to empower scientific teams, foster creativity and translate complex ideas to diverse stakeholders.
- Externally engaged, with a strong network across government, academia, industry, and funders—both nationally and internationally.
- Values-driven, with a demonstrable commitment to UKCEH's core values of excellence, integrity, and teamwork.





## How to apply

The deadline for receipt of applications is midnight (UK time) on Monday 22 September.

Please send applications to [ukceh@networkedpeople.com](mailto:ukceh@networkedpeople.com). Applications must include a full CV and a letter of application setting out your interest in the role and details of how your knowledge, skills and experience match the attributes sought (no more than two pages).

Informal questions regarding the post should be directed to Hamish Laing at Networked via [hamish.laing@networkedpeople.com](mailto:hamish.laing@networkedpeople.com) or +44 (0)7861 329463.



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