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Planning

tNCEA England Ecosystem Soils Classification Surveys

NATURAL ENGLAND

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-036263

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocids-h6vhtk-055654

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Scope

Reference

P-38349

Description

Soils Classification Requirement The requirement is to obtain detailed soil profile description and soil type classification for each soils monitoring plot. There will be between 2 and 6 soil monitoring plots (c. 16 m x c. 16 m) per EES monad (1 km x 1 km), with an expected average of 4 soil monitoring plots per EES monad. Soils Classification is a one-off survey on up to 500 monads per monitoring cycle. General, site, soil surface, and soil profile description will be in accordance with the Soil Survey Field Handbook, Hodgson (2022). Observations will be recorded in a standardised format on a field data collection app on a mobile device (most likely tablet) provided by Natural England. The following observations will be required at each soil plot: 1. General description of the site; 2. Site description: elevation, relief, soil erosion and deposition, flooding, rock outcrops, land use; 3. Description of soil surface; humus type (where relevant); 4. Description of the soil profile using a soil pit dug to 60 cm and extended to 120 cm using a 70 mm Edelman auger (provided), unless rock is encountered shallower than these depths. In undrained

peat soils with high water table description from a Russian corer (provided) will be required, including degree of decomposition to von Post scale. Disturbed soil samples will be taken from the middle of each soil horizon. The required sample quantity per horizon is 500 ml for mineral soils; for soil profiles with 4 horizons this equates to c.2 litres or ~ 3 kg per soil plot. For peat it will be sections from the corer, details will be provided.

Classification of the soil type will be according to Avery (1980) and soil series will be according to Clayden and Hollis (1984). Surveyors will be expected to have copies of Hodgson (2022), Avery (1980) and Clayden and Hollis (1984) and understand their contents. References Hodgson J.M. (ed.) (2022) Soil Survey Field Handbook. Soil Survey Technical Monograph No. 5, Cranfield. Avery, B.W. (1980) Soil Classification for England and Wales (Higher Categories). Soil Survey Technical Monograph No. 14. Harpenden. Clayden, B. and Hollis, J.M. (1984) Criteria for Differentiating Soil Series. Soil Survey Technical Monograph No. 17. Harpenden

More information about Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment Programme and England Ecosystem Survey The UK Government has set world-leading ambition on protecting our natural assets, internationally through the Convention of Biodiversity and domestically via the groundbreaking 25 Year Environment Plan. Inherently linked to the successful delivery of Net Zero, protecting our environmental services has never been more vital. Achieving these goals is underpinned by the provision of systematic and robust evidence. For the first-time, Defra are developing a programme to deliver up-to-date, England-wide environmental data to allow for agile policy making grounded in the best available evidence – to truly understand where we are and where we need to get to. NCEA is a transformative programme to understand the extent, condition and change over time of environmental assets across England's land and water environments, supporting the government's ambition to improve the environment within a generation. Natural England (NE) is one of several delivery partners in the NCEA Programme alongside Forest Research, Environment Agency, Joint Council for Nature Conservation and Royal Botanic Gardens Kew. The Programme is led by Defra as part of the Government's Major Projects Portfolio. Natural England is the Government's adviser for the natural environment in England. We help to protect and restore our natural world. As part of our science and evidence activities, we are delivering several projects for the NCEA, the most significant of which is the England Ecosystem Survey. England Ecosystem Survey (EES) is an ambitious new method of collecting environmental data. The aim of the EES is to get a true understanding of the condition of England's terrestrial environment and natural capital assets. To achieve this the survey will collect data on attributes of extent, condition and connectivity relating to habitats, vegetation and landscape features and landscape character, as well as soil physical and chemical properties and soil and water biota eDNA. It will also collect data to support Natural England's earth observation programme. Change will be assessed through repeat surveys on a five-year cycle. There are three different types of survey, each of which takes place in the same sample of 1km monad squares. Soils Classification surveys are a one-off requirement. Three types of surveys take place in each field season (delivery year) on a random stratified sample of monads selected by Natural England:

- Vegetation and landscape (V&L) – surveys required on 500+ monads per year: average time to complete each survey is between 1 and 7 days

for a surveyor team of two (average 3-4 days). Survey season from May to September. • Soil sampling and assessment – surveys on the same 500 monads (but likely fewer due to dropouts after V&L): average time to complete the survey is dependent on number of plots but usually 0.5 to 1 day per plot, and 3-4 plots average per monad, surveyor teams of two. Survey season from September to March. • Soil classification – numbers of surveys TBD but will be a sub-sample of the 500 monads: surveyors can work alone but require soil specialist knowledge. Survey season from May to March.

Contract dates (estimated)

- 4 May 2026 to 31 March 2028
- 1 year, 10 months, 28 days

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 14212400 - Soil
- 90714300 - Sectoral environmental auditing services
- 90700000 - Environmental services

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Engagement

Engagement deadline

10 July 2025

Engagement process description

England Ecosystem Soils Classification Surveys You are invited to participate in a supplier engagement event regarding our requirement for Soils Classification Surveys for England Ecosystem Survey. This is a key opportunity for suppliers to input into the requirement and the procurement process. We are keen to engage with the market and understand supplier capabilities. The event will take place virtually via MS Teams on the 10th July 2025 15:00 – 16:00. Interested suppliers are asked to register their interest by completing <https://forms.office.com/e/cZiyhmifZ2> This should be completed and returned no later than 1pm on the 09/06/2025. If you have any questions prior to the event please email joyce.angoma@defra.gov.uk The engagement session will include the opportunity for questions to be raised and also for the Authority to get feedback from you about the requirement.

Submission

Publication date of tender notice (estimated)

1 September 2025

Contracting authority

NATURAL ENGLAND

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PJDG-6588-XDMM

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United Kingdom

Contact name: Defra Commercial (DgC)

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Website: <https://defra-family.force.com/s/Welcome>

Region: UKI32 - Westminster

Organisation type: Public authority - central government