

## Summary of NERC citation study 2012

NERC provides the UK with world-leading environmental science knowledge and skills that are essential for economic growth and for tackling major challenges facing society. Such economic opportunities and societal challenges include: how to provide secure food, water, energy and other natural resources for a growing population; how to protect vulnerable people, places and infrastructure from natural and man-made environmental hazards; how to respond to environmental changes such as climate change and biodiversity loss.

World-leading environmental science makes the UK an authoritative leader of international policy, attracts multinational businesses to invest in the UK, enables UK businesses to rapidly absorb and exploit new knowledge and technologies, and reduces the risks that act as barriers to private investment in new technologies and businesses.

So how do we know that NERC-funded environmental science leads the world on excellence? One well-established world-wide benchmark is the number of times a scientific paper is mentioned (cited) by their peers in other papers: so-called citation impact. Independent studies recently commissioned by the UK Department of Business Innovation and Skills

[\[http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/science/docs/i/11-p123-international-comparative-performance-uk-research-base-2011.pdf\]](http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/science/docs/i/11-p123-international-comparative-performance-uk-research-base-2011.pdf) and NERC

[\[http://www.nerc.ac.uk/about/perform/documents/citations-study-2012.pdf\]](http://www.nerc.ac.uk/about/perform/documents/citations-study-2012.pdf) show:

- In environmental science, the UK leads the world on excellence and delivers great value for money. UK environmental science is cited more often than any other major research country (1.4 times the world average and rising), many of whom invest a larger proportion of national wealth (GDP) in research.
- NERC-funded research performs significantly more strongly than other UK environmental science. This advantage is delivered across all NERC funding streams and research providers including: research fellows; responsive research projects in universities and NERC research centres; directed research programmes in universities and NERC research centres; national capability delivered by NERC research centres and other providers.
- NERC's own research centres perform more strongly than many other UK research institutions. NERC centres significantly outperform other public research institutions (double the citation impact and rising) and many universities. For example the NERC Centre for Ecology and Hydrology is the leading UK research institution in ecology (responsible for 18% of all UK citations in ecology).
- NERC-funded scientists are often leaders and partners in international programmes. More than half (53%) of NERC-funded scientific publications involve international collaborators.

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