

Is Palaeoecological Research Utilised in UK Peatland Restoration Projects?

Participant Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in an **online survey** about **the extent to which palaeoecological research is used to support or inform UK peatland restoration projects**. Before you decide whether to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully before deciding whether to take part, and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

About the research

Who will conduct the research?

Jessica Gauld, PhD student in the Department of Geography, School of Environment, Education and Development, The University of Manchester. Jessica is leading on this research project within the framework of her PhD at The University of Manchester, which is funded by the university's President's Doctoral Scholarship Award.

This PhD is supervised by Dr William Fletcher and Dr Emma Shuttleworth.

What is the purpose of the research?

The purpose of the research is to gain a better understanding of the extent to which palaeoecological research has been utilised in UK peatland restoration projects, including the nature of research input and how this work is reported in the practice community. Participants do not need to be familiar with or have prior experience with palaeoecological research to take part.

Palaeoecology has been widely advocated as valuable for informing practical management and restoration of peatland ecosystems. Understanding the advantages, applications, and barriers of a more applied palaeoecology have become core topics within the palaeoecological literature in recent years and greater efforts are being made to improve the link between palaeoecology and practice. Increasing collaborative efforts indicate that the value of palaeoecology is recognised by both the research and practice community.

In order to see the full picture, we want to understand palaeoecological input from a practice perspective. This includes the extent to which palaeoecology has been included in past and current peatland restoration projects, whether its use is reported, and the impact of research on practice.

What would my involvement be?

What would I be asked to do if I took part?

You would be asked to complete an anonymous online survey hosted on Qualtrics. You will answer questions about peatland restoration project(s) you have been or are currently involved in, and

whether or not those projects included palaeoecological research in any capacity. You can take the survey multiple times if you have been involved in multiple peatland restoration projects.

The online survey should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete and includes both multiple choice and written answers. The survey will ask questions regarding the restoration project (aims, duration), whether palaeoecological research was utilised, and how the research contributed to the restoration. Some questions are required, these will be indicated. Other questions are optional, and these may be left blank.

Please note, the survey will not ask for personal information and will not collect your IP address.

Will I be compensated for taking part?

No compensation will be offered for taking part.

What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be asked to **tick a box at the start of the survey** to confirm consent. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason and without detriment to yourself up until the point that you submit your online responses. If you have not yet submitted the survey, simply exit the browser. It will not be possible to remove your data from the project once you have submitted your responses as they are collected anonymously and we will not be able to identify your specific data. This does not affect your data protection rights. If you decide not to take part you do not need to do anything further.

What do I do now?

If you wish to take part, use the link on the IUCN UK Peatland Programme webpage to take part in the survey.

If you do not wish to take part, you do not need to do anything further.

If you have any questions, please contact Jessica using the contact details below.

Contact Details

If you have any queries about the study, please contact the researcher:

Jessica Gauld

jessica.gauld@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk

Data Protection, Confidentiality and Further Details Information

Data Protection and Confidentiality

Will my participation in the study be confidential?

In accordance with data protection law, The University of Manchester is the Data Controller for this project. This means that we are responsible for making sure your information is kept secure, confidential and used only in the way you have been told it will be used. All researchers are trained with this in mind, and your data will be looked after in the following way.

All information gathered for this survey is anonymous.

Will the outcomes of the research be published?

Findings will be published in a PhD thesis and peer-reviewed journal. Additionally, it is likely that findings will also be presented at conferences.

Will my information be shared with others?

In accordance with the University of Manchester's Research Privacy Notice and with your consent, we would like to be able to share your anonymised data with other University of Manchester researchers who are doing studies similar to ours. This information will not identify you and will not be combined with other information in a way that could identify you. The information will only be used for the purpose of research, and cannot be used for any other matter including making decisions about future services available to you.

Will my information be put into an archive?

At the end of the project we would like to deposit a fully anonymised dataset in an open data repository where it will be permanently stored. We will use Figshare at the University of Manchester Library. Researchers at other institutions and others can access the anonymised data directly from the repository and use it for further research or to check our analysis and results.

Auditing and Monitoring

Please also note that individuals from The University of Manchester or regulatory authorities may need to look at the data collected for this study to make sure the project is being carried out as planned. This may involve looking at identifiable data. All individuals involved in auditing and monitoring the study will have a strict duty of confidentiality to you as a research participant.

What if I have a complaint?

If you have a complaint that you wish to direct to members of the research team, please contact:

Will Fletcher: will.fletcher@manchester.ac.uk

Emma Shuttleworth: emma.shuttleworth@manchester.ac.uk

If you wish to make a formal complaint to someone independent of the research team or if you are not satisfied with the response you have gained from the researchers in the first instance, then please contact

The Research Ethics Manager: research.complaints@manchester.ac.uk or by telephoning 0161 306 8089.

If you wish to contact us about your data protection rights, please email dataprotection@manchester.ac.uk.

You also have a right to complain to the [Information Commissioner's Office about complaints relating to your personal identifiable information](#), Tel 0303 123 1113.