

EPIC Environmental Implementation Workstream Brief 2026-2027

Purpose

This workstream aims to embed implementation science into environmental practice and policy across the UK, improving the success of environmental initiatives. It does this by supporting practitioners, advancing research and networks, and advocating for policy that is deliverable. This directly mirrors EPIC's mission to 'understand delivery challenges, support practitioners and advocate for implementation-minded policy.' The workstream will be actioned over a two-year period.

This workstream was designed with key implementation principles in mind. Its first pillar focuses on bottom-up support for practitioners, through tools, training and peer networks. The second pillar leverages existing structures such as the UK Implementation Society and the European Implementation Collaborative, to ensure strong knowledge exchange and collaboration. The inclusion of research initiatives and case studies aligns with EPIC's focus on evidence-informed practice, ensuring that environmental interventions are grounded in robust data and proven methods. Finally, the advocacy pillar focuses on top-down and up-stream influence by advocating for implementation-minded policy – to ensure that environmental strategies are not only ambitious but also practical and sustainable.

This proposal operationalises EPIC's mission, translating its principles into actionable steps that connect practice, research, and policy. By linking practice, research and policy, the workstreams aims to create a continuous learning loop that enables long-term environmental impact.

Pillar 1: Supporting Practitioners

Local authorities often face challenges in translating environmental policy into actionable steps. Limited awareness of implementation science, resource constraints, and fragmented guidance hinder effective delivery. This pillar focuses on building capacity through practical tools, peer learning, and targeted training.

Key Strategies:

- Develop an "Environmental Implementation Guide" tailored for local authorities.
- Deliver workshops and webinars introducing implementation science and practice.
- Establish peer-support networks for sharing best practices and presenting case studies.
- Provide implementation checklists and how-to guides linked to topics in the guide.
- Work with CEDHE to include implementation as a key competency in their course accreditation

Pillar 2: Research and Networking

Implementation science is underutilised in the environmental sector. This pillar aims to bridge that gap by leveraging existing networks such as the UK Implementation Society (UK-IS) and the European Implementation Collaborative (EIC), while fostering new collaborations and research initiatives.

Key Strategies:

- Form an EIC-EPIC working group focused on environmental implementation.
- Co-host events with UK-IS and EIC to showcase case studies and research.
- Commission comparative studies on climate adaptation implementation.
- Disseminate findings through EPIC channels and partner platforms.

Pillar 3: Advocating for Implementation-minded Policy

Environmental policies often lack clarity on operational feasibility. This pillar seeks to influence policy design by embedding implementability considerations and engaging policymakers through structured dialogues and recognition initiatives.

Key Strategies:

- Develop policy briefs highlighting implementation barriers and solutions.
- Engage with policy stakeholders to discuss implementation principles.
- Launch an annual “Environmental Implementation Prize” for exemplary delivery.
- Create recurring policy dialogues between practitioners, researchers, and policymakers.

Action Table - Pillar 1: Supporting Practitioners

Action	Measures	Indicators	Outcomes	Complete by
Develop Environmental Implementation Guide	Guide published and distributed	Number of downloads and citations	Increased practitioner confidence	V1 Complete
Develop training/feedback course (see Thinkific training proposal document for more detail)	Attendance rates	Participant feedback scores	Improved understanding of the guidance and improved understanding for EPIC of areas for development in V.2 of the guidance	Q1 2026
Create peer-support networks	Network established	Number of active members	Enhanced collaboration among local authorities	Q3 2027
Work with CEDHE to promote the development of implementation skills in environmental science courses	Implementation is included as a key competency in CEDHE course accreditation	Student and academic feedback scores	Improved early career environmental practitioner implementation skills and understanding	Q1 2027

Action Table - Pillar 2: Research and Networking

Action	Measures	Indicators	Outcomes	Complete by
Form EIC-EPIC working group	Group launched	Number of meetings and outputs	Stronger UK-EU collaboration	Q1 2026
Co-host events with UK-IS and EIC	Event attendance	Number of case studies presented	Increased visibility of implementation in environment	Q2 2027

Commission comparative studies	Studies completed	Publications and citations	Evidence base for effective implementation	Q2 2027
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Action Table - Pillar 3: Advocating for Implementation-minded Policy

Action	Measures	Indicators	Outcomes	Complete by:
Work with EPAC to develop environmental implementation-minded policy white paper	Paper published	Policymaker and internal (EPIC) engagement metrics	Greater inclusion of implementability in policy	Q3 2026
Develop policy briefs, based on EPIC's implementation-minded policy paper	Briefs published	Policymaker engagement metrics	Greater inclusion of implementability in policy	Q4 2026
Engage with policy stakeholders	Meetings held	Number of recommendations adopted	Policy frameworks aligned with implementation principles	Q2 2027
Launch Clean Implementation Prize	Prize awarded annually	Media coverage and nominations	Recognition of best practice	Q2 2027