



Introduction

BAS works in accordance with the Environmental Protocol, the UK Antarctic Act and equivalent Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands legislation, setting environmental policy and working with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office to lead on Antarctic environmental affairs. The Protocol requires all activities to be planned and conducted to limit adverse environmental impacts. BAS is committed to environmental stewardship of the Polar Regions.

Environmental Strategy objectives

- To lead on Antarctic environmental affairs by shaping Antarctic environmental policy
- To continually improve our environmental performance
- To conserve biodiversity, science, and heritage values
- To exceed compliance and drive best practice



Before departure

- Attend the Pre-Deployment Environmental Briefings
- Ensure any cargo you are consigning for shipment is biosecure, i.e. free of soil, plant material and invertebrates. Biosecurity kitbags are held by each BAS science group and there are three biosecurity stations across BAS Cambridge. Supply Chain Logistics reserves the right to reject any cargo put forward for consignment that is not biosecure
- Ensure your clothes, footwear and other personal belongings are biosecure before leaving for Antarctica and South Georgia. Clothing, equipment and luggage may be inspected upon arrival
- Take only environmentally benign toiletries – no microplastics in scrubs or toothpastes, no harsh chemicals and avoid aerosols. Do not allow any harsh substances, including chemicals or oils, to enter drainage systems, including toilets or sinks, as they will harm sewage treatment plant microbes where they exist and directly harm the nearshore environment where sewage treatment is minimal
- Remove as much packaging as possible prior to departure e.g. cardboard on toiletries
- Do not bring/use non-essential personal electrical equipment, if you need to bring any equipment that is above 2.5W you must fill out [this form](#). Where practicable, use rechargeable batteries
- Inform all persons likely to send gifts or packages to you while in South Georgia or Antarctica of all restrictions as outlined in this code

Do not pack any prohibited and restricted items (including but not limited to)

- Polystyrene chips, plastic confetti or similar packaging
- Environmentally-damaging supplies such as glitter and harsh glues

- Elemental mercury
- Any living plant, animal, or micro-organism
- Non-sterile soil or compost
- Non-native species/seeds/bulbs/cuttings
- Untreated wood where bark remains attached
- Perishable foods including fruit, vegetables, cheese, fish or meat
- Personal drones (UAVs/RPAS)

Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) and permits

Activities are only conducted in Antarctica and South Georgia after an EIA has been undertaken to assess the possible environmental impacts. Some activities may also require a permit before they are allowed to proceed. Project/science leads must ensure all members of their team are aware of the agreed mitigations in the EIA and conditions of any permits.

In Antarctica/South Georgia

- Follow the requirements of any EIA or conditions of any permit for your projects
- Do not enter protected areas unless you have a permit. Prior to entry you must familiarise yourself with the management plan and pay particular attention to the conditions of your permit and the mitigations in your EIA
- Do not flush anything (other than pee, poo and small amounts of loo roll) down the toilets
- Minimise the waste you produce and ensure waste is segregated and disposed of properly. You will be given further direction on arrival
- Do not litter, including tea bags, cigarette ends or food scraps either on land or overboard
- Eradicate and report any non-native species found such as rats or flies



- Use the bootwash facilities provided on stations and ships
- Do not remove, destroy or damage Historic Sites or Monuments or the artefacts within or around them
- Do not build cairns
- Do not pollute lakes or water courses (this includes urinating!)
- Do not paint or engrave names or graffiti on rocks, buildings or other structures
- Secure your equipment, stores and wastes to prevent damage/loss to the environment from high winds
- Chin straps on hard hats/helmets must be worn where loss to the environment could occur, including in or around the marine environment or on terrain where any potential losses may not be recoverable
- Biosecure equipment and clothing when travelling between biologically-distinct regions or between different colonies of wildlife to prevent transfer of non-native species and disease
- Manage fuels and hazardous chemicals to prevent leaks or spills, ensure containers are in good condition and free from rust. Avoid refuelling in strong winds, utilise drip trays or plant nappies and ensure spill absorbents are close to hand
- If involved in refuelling, follow established procedures and never leave refuelling unattended
- Remove everything you take into the field unless authorised not to by the Environment Office
- Open burning or dumping of waste is prohibited. All waste (except sewage/food waste) is removed from Antarctica and South Georgia

Minimise disturbance to wildlife and vegetation

- Do not feed, handle or disturb birds or seals, or approach too closely for photographs (stay at least 5m from wildlife). Walk slowly around them and stay quiet
- Do not use vehicles, boats, or aircraft in any way that will disturb wildlife
- No 'recreational' sampling. Do not collect samples of biological or geological origin (including plants, eggs, bones, antlers, rocks, meteorites, fossils) unless you have been granted a permit to do so for scientific purposes
- When walking, use established routes where possible
- Do not walk or drive over extensive areas of moss or lichen
- Prevent light pollution – switch off external lights and close blinds

Minimise resource use

Energy production requires the use of fuel with related carbon emissions and other environmental impacts.

Fresh water production, hot water generation and waste water treatment are a significant use of energy. To reduce this:

- Switch off all energy-using devices when not in use including lighting, computers and other equipment
- Switch off all electric heaters when not in use and use the radiator valves (TRVs) to control the temperature of the room you are in. A recommended bedroom temperature is 18°C while a recommended living room temperature is 20°C. Make sure the radiators and radiator valves are not blocked or covered by furniture or clothes
- Remember to turn down the radiator valve when leaving the room or off completely when opening the window

- Only take brief showers (3 to 4 minutes)
- Don't leave taps running
- Only wash full loads of clothing and use tumble dryers only when necessary, i.e. when no drying space is available
- Please report any leaks you see, no matter how small
- Walk! Avoid unnecessary journeys in vehicles (skidoos and gators)

Incident reporting

- Report all environmental incidents ASAP (and within 24 hours) either to management or on Maximo
- Example incidents include but are not limited to: finding of non-native species, oil/chemical spills, bird strikes, deviation from EIA, animal incidents or losses of equipment

Additional resources

- [Guide to Going South](#)
- [Waste Management Handbook](#) (LND-AL-GUI-ENV-1486 or SEA-SD-ECO-GEN-01)
- [BAS Biosecurity Regulations](#) (LND-AL-REG-ENV-1525 or SEA-SD-ECO-ANX-02)
- [Environmental Incidents What to Report](#) (LND-AL-GUI-ENV-1500)
- [Antarctic wildlife](#) – information you need to know
- [Wildlife Interaction Manual](#) (LND-AL-GUI-ENV-1494 or SEA-SD-ECO-ANX-04)
- [Environment Office Digital Workspace](#) pages

For more information please contact the BAS Environment Office at environment@bas.ac.uk

