



Ecologist

Dr. Rob Rowlands - Technical Director

● How long have you worked in the industry?

I have worked as a professional ecologist in private practice for over 20 years; working on a wide range of projects throughout the UK and Ireland. In that time, I have provided expert witness evidence for regionally and nationally important projects ensuring that ecological resources are protected and enhanced whilst also delivering housing, industrial, commercial, infrastructure and renewables projects. The industry has changed significantly in that period through multiple iterations in legislation and planning policy through to the emergence of new and innovative survey techniques.

● Which career path did you follow to get to where you are today?

Having gained a First Class Honours degree in Environmental Biology from Aberystwyth University, I completed my PhD at University College Dublin; researching the restoration of industrial peatlands with a focus on the Irish context but also drawing on research from Canada and Finland. I was awarded my Doctorate in 2001; then entering into private practice specialising in ecological and environmental assessment.

Most of my career to date was spent in the UK; however I moved to work for RPS in the Republic of Ireland in 2020. I have been a full Member of CIEEM (MCIEEM) and a Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv) for c. 15 years. I am proud to be currently responsible for growing and developing RPS's ecology services and team in the Republic of Ireland and applying the skills and experiences I have developed personally over the last 20 plus years to that service and team.

● How would you explain your job to people? What does a typical week or project include?

In over 20 years, no week has ever been the same and every project is unique in terms of its characteristics and challenges. I am currently working on a range of nationally-critical projects; which includes contributing to the delivery of Ireland's 2030 target with respect to renewable energy.

Typically, my week focuses on the ecology strategy; ensuring that projects are designed and assessed robustly with respect to biodiversity. It is spent mentoring my colleagues; developing their skills and enjoying watching them grow professionally. There is a significant dollop of "problem solving" in every week; whether it's an issue related to equipment or team logistics, to how do you construct new city-wide flood relief infrastructure while also ensuring biodiversity is maintained and enhanced?

● What role can your profession play in the fight against climate change? How can your profession make a difference?

Through ensuring that the projects that we design and assess not only protect biodiversity, but contribute to reversing the historic trend of biodiversity loss due to human impacts and effects; locally, nationally and internationally. Our profession needs to set the standard and strive for new standards which will benefit biodiversity and humanity.



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