



Going Places with Geography

10 Policy and Government

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**Royal
Geographical
Society**
with IBG

Advancing geography
and geographical learning

I studied Geography at GCSE and A Level and went onto graduate in 2007 with a 2.1 in Geography with Ecology (BSc Hons) from Sussex University. After university I secured a placement as a Policy Intern with the British Ecological Society. This led to me securing my first paid job with the RSPB as a Conservation Officer.

Whilst I was at the RSPB, the UK created the Climate Change Act. I felt inspired and proud that the UK was the first country in the world to implement a law to reduce carbon emissions. In 2010, I was successful in securing my first job working for DECC on an embryonic climate mitigation technology called Carbon Capture and Storage. I have since been very lucky to have had the privilege of working with countries such as China, South Africa and Mexico to teach them about policy measures to reduce their carbon emissions, in particular about emissions trading schemes, learning from the EU's experience.

What does your job entail?

In 2011, EU leaders agreed an objective to limit a rise in global temperature to below 2°C and that we should reduce our greenhouse gas emissions in the EU by 80-95% by 2050. I currently work on the EU negotiations for the EU's 2030 climate change target where the UK is calling for at least a 40% reduction in domestic greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. This target will be agreed by all EU leaders, including our Prime Minister, and will also form our contribution to the UN's international climate change negotiations next year.

I specifically lead on the UK's engagement strategy which identifies opportunities to engage with other countries, NGOs and businesses to influence them on the UK's position to secure an ambitious greenhouse gas reduction target for 2030. What I love about my job is how many other policies are linked to my work from EU energy security, our domestic climate change targets to foreign policy. I also get to work with a lot of fantastic and committed people and engage with others across

Europe, including Ministers and other influential people.

How does geography help you in your everyday work?

Studying geography has given me a breadth of knowledge and an understanding of a wide number of environmental and global issues which I apply to my job every day. The analytical skills I learnt at university have been invaluable as I am required to digest a lot of complex information, on economic modelling, written statements, and policy papers and turn them into a communication document that is understandable by others. Having a scientific understanding of climate change from my degree, has given me credibility when communicating with stakeholders. It really helps to know your subject and therefore be able to remind people why we are tackling climate change!

What advice would you give others?

Follow your passion and get some experience! My volunteering was invaluable. Never stop learning. Continuing your development will only help you succeed.

Other geographers also working in this sector include Assistant Consultant, International Development, Ecorys UK

Civil Servant, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Director of the Mayor's Office of Housing Recovery Operations, City of New York

Flood Incident Management Team Leader, Environment Agency

Head of Flood Hazard Research Centre, University of Middlesex

Property Information Manager, Barrow Borough Council
Public Communications Manager, Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and Economics

Senior Planner, Department of Communities and Local Government

Social Development Advisor, the Department for International Development

UK Location, Engagement and Monitoring Officer, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Further support

Details of undergraduate courses: For more details of the range of geography courses offered by universities and how you can enhance your application to higher education see www.rgs.org/studygeography.

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