

Example 3-month plan for working with the environment

The Big Seaweed Search is a scientific research project run by the Marine Conservation Society and the Natural History Museum. By recording the distribution of 14 seaweed species on UK shores, it helps us monitor the effects of environmental change on Britain's sea life.

This plan is an example of how you could take part in the Big Seaweed Search as part of your DofE award. Remember to discuss how to stay safe while doing this activity.

Please note we cannot act as Assessors for your award. Please see the advice on choosing an assessor on the DofE website.

Thank you for contributing to this globally-important dataset. Good luck!

Week	Activity	Example evidence
1	<p>Plan and prepare for your Big Seaweed Search</p> <p>Head to our dedicated Big Seaweed Search page to find out about the steps involved.</p> <p>Download your guide and recording form at www.bigseaweedsearch.org/take-part.</p> <p>Photographs are very important in this project - you must include at least one photo of each seaweed you find for the team to be able to check and accept your data. Taking clear, close-up photographs of seaweed can be difficult. Practise taking good-quality close ups so you know that your data will be as useful as possible. Look at the Guide to taking photos for helpful hints and advice.</p>	<p>Activity log</p> <p>Diary</p> <p>Research notes</p> <p>Practice photos</p>
2	<p>Choose your survey areas</p> <p>You will survey a different part of the shore each week, which means you'll need 10 locations. Each survey area should be a five-metre wide plot running from the top of the shore down to the sea. (No need for a tape measure - five metres is approximately five adult paces.)</p>	<p>Checklist</p> <p>Activity log</p> <p>Diary</p> <p>Map of survey areas</p> <p>Risk checklist</p>

Have a look in the [guide](#) for advice on the type of areas to survey.

On a map, draw the locations of your survey areas. You could take photographs as references.

Use the safety guidelines in the guide and the help of your assessor to write a risk checklist so you stay safe when you're surveying.

3 to 12 **Conduct your Big Seaweed Search**

Each week, survey a different part of the shore you identified using the [recording form](#) to log what you collect. Ideally, take photos of the seaweed species with your back to the sea. Remember you must log your findings at www.bigseaweedsearch.org/data-entry for them to be included in the research project. If you register for an account you will be able to review your findings.

Activity log
Diary
Recording sheets
Photos

If you share any images on social media, please tag [@NHM_London](#) and [@mcsuk](#) and use [#SeaweedSearch](#).

13 **Evaluation**

Reflect on what went well and what could be improved. You could create a list of dos and don'ts to be used by other DofE participants.

Evaluation notes
Diary
Activity log
Dos and don'ts

Take a moment to celebrate your achievement. You have contributed vital baseline information that will help scientists understand the impact of climate change, ocean acidification and non-native seaweeds on our shores.

Thank you!

Thank you for contributing to this important research project. Find out about more ways you can work with us to save our seas at mcsuk.org/what-you-can-do