**ECT SCORING CRITERIA FOR LTE ADMISSION TO ECT REGISTER**

**ECT uses 12 criteria to assess applications for long-term ecological experiments to be admitted to the ECT’s formal register. The criteria are detailed below and are scored on a four-point scale from 0-3.**

**1. Uniqueness/Novelty:** Any LTE that has repeated the same experimental manipulations of another older ongoing LTE in the same habitat but added one or more extra drivers to examine possible interactions scores 3. Any LTE that has repeated the same experimental manipulations of another older ongoing LTE, but on a different habitat type or in a different environment scores 2. Any LTE that simply repeated the same experimental manipulations of another older ongoing LTE on the same habitat type scores 1.

**2. Statistical Design:** the following scoring system applies:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Number of Randomised Replicates** | | | |
| **Total Number of Treatments** | 4+ | 3 | 2 | No reps |
| ≥ 16 | *3* | *3* | *2* | *0* |
| 11 - 15 | *3* | *3* | *2* | *0* |
| 6 - 10 | *3* | *2* | *1* | *0* |
| ≤ 5 | *3* | *2* | *0* | *0* |

**3. Security of Tenure:** High security e.g. NNR, NT land scores 3, Research Institute or University owned land = 2, private freehold land with 25-year lease or more = 1, land under short-term lease < 25 years scores 0.

**4. Plot Size (appropriate to habitat, to manipulated driver and as future platform):** Substantial plot sizes allowing flexibility scores 3. Plot sizes of a few square metres are considered to be weak in relation to potential for future subdivision and, depending on knowledge of drivers/habitats being manipulated, receive a score of 2 or 1. Plot sizes entirely inappropriate scores 0.

**5. Plant, Soil and Meteorological Data (including baseline data):** Availability of data on all three for many/most years scores 3. If one of the three had not been recorded at all = 2. If more than one missing and/or incomplete = 1, none available scores 0.

**6. Longevity:** 0 to 6 years scores 1, 7 to 14 years scores 2, 15 or more years scores 3.

**7. Expansion Potential:** Two or more "spare" control plots per replicate block scores 3. Plot size still sufficiently large to split and still be appropriate for habitat and/or driver = 2. Area of habitat around plots managed in the same way as the control and sufficiently large to contain new treatment plots + new control = 1. No expansion potential scores 0.

**8. Data Availability:** No restrictions to data availability scores 3. Accessibility of some data restricted in the short-term (< 5 years), and/or gaps in data (e.g. lack of continuity if experiment was suspended) = 2. Accessibility of some data restricted (for foreseeable future) and/or if experiment set up by someone who has since retired and the data archive is not 100% available to their successor = 1. No data available scores 0.

**9, Continuity of Treatment:** Unbroken record of treatment application scores 3. A break in continuity of 1-2 years = 2. A break in continuity of > 2 years = 1. Two or more breaks in continuity of 1-2 years in each case scores 0.

**10. Drivers:** Scoring based on the number of ecological drivers being manipulated; 1 for 1, 2 for 2 and 3 for 3 or more.

**11. Sample Archive**: Soil, water and plant/animal samples from baseline and subsequent years archived in conditions that ensure stability scores 3, some samples missing from archive = 2, many samples missing = 1, no archived material at all scores 0.

**12. Cooperation/Availability to Community as Research Platform:** High with no restrictions scores 3, some restrictions = 2, severe restrictions = 1, no access for others scores 0.