
Landscape-scale agri-environment schemes could be more effective for both farmers and the natural environment

A landscape-scale approach to agri-environment schemes might improve their success but this would involve more partnership working for farmers and would require policies to encourage collaboration.

How would landscape-scale approaches help?

- Agri-environment schemes could be more effective at landscape scale, particularly in view of environmental change.
- They would help populations to connect with one another and enable them to disperse across landscapes and adapt to changes.
- Higher Level Stewardship and Upland Entry Level Stewardship offer incentives for partnership working.
- Nature Improvement Partnerships and other protected areas can play a useful role.

What has CRE research found?

Research carried out in CRE found that:

- There was the potential for more boundary-spanning agreements.
- There was more opportunity in lowland farmland.
- There were key barriers to be overcome.

What are the implications for UK policy?

New collaborative agri-environment schemes have potential to overcome farmers' concerns about existing schemes.

To overcome barriers there is a need for:

- More facilitation by external organisations in setting up schemes.
- An allowance to cover the overheads involved in setting up agreements.
- More discretion and flexibility in how payments are allocated within partnerships.
- Allowing part-farm agreements as these may contribute to better landscape-scale outcomes.
- Inclusion of boundary spanning options in Entry Level Stewardship.
- More positive promotion of boundary-spanning agreements involving several landowners and inclusion of better incentives for this when schemes are being designed.
- More specific targeting of locations that would benefit from this approach.

Further information:

- Franks, J.R. & Emery, S.B. (2013), [Incentivising collaborative environmental stewardship: Lessons from existing Environmental Stewardship Scheme options](#), *Land Use Policy* 30: 847-862.
- Emery, S.B. & Franks, J.R. (2012), [The potential for collaborative agri-environment schemes in England: Can a well-designed collaborative approach address farmers' concerns with current schemes?](#), *Journal of Rural Studies* 28(3): 218-231.
- Franks, J.R., Emery, S.B., Whittingham, M.J. & McKenzie, A.J. (2011), [Options for Landscape Scale Collaboration under the UK's Environmental Stewardship Scheme](#), CRE Research Report.
- McKenzie, A.J., Emery, S.B., Franks, J.R. & Whittingham, M.J. (In Press), Landscape-scale conservation: Collaborative agri-environment schemes could benefit both biodiversity and ecosystem services but will farmers be willing to participate? *Journal of Applied Ecology*.

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