

# **Brexit: where next for the environment?**

## **Environment Links Conference Report 3 – 4 October 2016 National Museum, Cardiff, Wales**



Monday 3 October

### **Introduction**

The afternoon was opened by Karen Whitfield, acting Director of Wales Environment Link, who welcomed all delegates, ran through the programme for the next two days and introduced the first speaker, Cabinet Secretary for the Environment and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths.

### **Lesley Griffiths, Cabinet Secretary for the Environment and Rural Affairs**

The Cabinet Secretary welcomed the opportunity to address the Environment Links from across the UK and thanked WEL for its work and engagement with her portfolio so far. She made the following key points:

- The Environment and Rural Affairs portfolio brings together the issues of farming, food and biodiversity
- Work will be undertaken with Cabinet colleagues to deliver cross-cutting solutions in priority areas such as health, education and the economy
- Implementation of the Environment Act is a key area of responsibility

All of this is now happening in the context of the EU Referendum result and the UK's exit from the EU – addressing the implications is top priority. The Cabinet Secretary stated:

- The implications of leaving the EU are profound for the environment portfolio in Wales and across the UK
- EU legislation and funding has delivered significant benefits for the environment portfolio in Wales and these benefits should be not only safeguarded, but built upon
- Approximately two-thirds of Wales' current legal framework for the environment derives from EU legislation (initial mapping identified over 5000 pieces of legislation)
- This brings both challenges and opportunities, and the Cabinet Secretary has hosted a series of roundtable meetings and workshops with stakeholders over the summer to discuss the implications for the environment – WEL members were thanked for their contributions

- The workshops have looked at risks and issues facing individual areas as well as common issues across sectors
- The benefits brought about by EU legislation are not just important to our natural environment, but also for the reputation of Wales in terms of standards achieved in high quality produce and world class tourism
- The workshops will continue and feed into the next roundtable meeting, which will inform Wales' position in forging a way forward post-EU Referendum
- The Cabinet Secretary has been engaging with partners in Brussels and has also invited Ministers representing similar portfolios from across the UK to meet in Cardiff this autumn
- Wales' new legislation, in particular the Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG Act) and the Environment Act provide a strong foundation for Wales and are aligned with international commitments which will continue beyond a UK exit from the EU
- Wales' Nature Recovery Plan, developed alongside and in context of both Acts, restates the Welsh Government's commitment to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2020
- The Cabinet Secretary is proud to consider herself a Biodiversity Champion in line with WEL's Species Champions campaign which was launched in June.

The Cabinet Secretary then described the main aspects of Environment Act and its relationship with other plans, strategies and funds, such as the Nature Recovery Plan, Nature Fund and Sustainable Management Scheme, and also how these relate to commitments in the WFG Act. The following products of the Environment Act were described:

- Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience Duty to strengthen action for biodiversity by public bodies – this duty is also expected to assist public bodies to achieve their well-being objectives, which they must set as a requirement of the WFG Act
- The State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR) published by Natural Resources Wales – this will be the key evidence base to inform future policy for sustainable management of natural resources
- The statutory National Natural Resources Policy (NNRP) will set out the Welsh Ministers' policies and the priorities, risks and opportunities for the sustainable management of natural resources, to be published in March 2017 after a consultation in the autumn
- Area Statements – to be produced by Natural Resources Wales to act as a local evidence base and identify local issues which will need to be addressed by Public Service Boards (local authority-led boards established as part of the WFG Act) in their local well-being plans (also required by the WFG Act)
- Guidance to public bodies on their biodiversity duty and their role in relation to Area Statements is also to be produced

The Cabinet Secretary announced the recent publication of the Welsh Government's Programme for Government and the commitments to sustainability within it. She noted the fact that areas within her portfolio have been devolved since devolution 17 years ago, and the importance of Wales' place at the Brexit negotiating table. She also stated the importance of a reformed governance framework for the UK. She finished by urging all ELUK members to play their part.

**Plenary Discussion Session – how do we ensure the environment continues to be protected and enhanced as we transition towards Brexit?** *(Chaired by Charles Dundas, Vice Chair, SEL / Public Affairs Manager, Woodland Trust)*

Charles Dundas thanked the Cabinet Secretary for her speech and she was able to stay for a couple of quick questions before leaving for her next engagement.

Questions were asked about the potential for conflict between growth and resilience. The Cabinet Secretary responded by referring to the opportunities for change, especially in the agriculture sector. Matthew Quinn, Director, Environment and Sustainable Development within the Welsh Government, stayed for part of the following discussion session.

Each of the UK Links began by summarising action and engagement so far in relation to Brexit, and the following key policy areas were common to all:

- The future of land use/agriculture policy – the only area where genuine opportunities appear to be being acknowledged and pursued by ELUK members
- Marine policy and legislation – particularly Marine Strategy Framework Directive
- Biodiversity and nature conservation policy and legislation

In addition WCL have a group looking at legal implications and gathering evidence that could be used to prepare defences.

Common concerns were the drive for deregulation from Westminster and the heavy reliance on EU funding in devolved nations. The Irish Environment Network, from the Republic of Ireland, cited concerns about the shared environmental issues in Ireland as a whole and shared EU legal system with the UK, which will now change. The implications of this are worrying for Ireland.

Possible frameworks for powers and legislation in the UK following Brexit were discussed. For the devolved nations, and of particular concern to Wales, is the possibility of repatriation of powers to a UK level, resulting in the potential roll-back of powers in the devolved nations. There is aspiration from the Welsh Government for the new framework to be built up co-operatively with devolved nations developing the new framework together with Westminster, rather than having a UK Framework imposed from the top down – this needs to be a discussion of equals.

The following key questions were identified for ELUK members to consider over the coming weeks and months:

1. What do ELUK members want to see at a UK and a devolved level?
2. Will we end up with more complicated devolved structures?

It was recognised that different policy areas may provide different answers to these questions. Common positions were acknowledged as important, with room for differentiation in the detail for each devolved nation.

One point which resonated around the room was raised by Paul DeZylva of Friends of the Earth: whichever way members of the public voted, they did not vote for lower environmental standards. It is the responsibility of ELUK members to play their part in engaging the public with clear, positive and engaging messages on a few key issues that will communicate the risks and opportunities now facing the environment.

The following issues were identified as potential issues/messages that ELUK members could work on together:

- Clarifying what “taking back control” should mean (and what it should not mean)
- Focus on protecting and enhancing ecosystem services
- Demonstrate the value of the EU Directives
- Transition to a different food system based on waste reduction, sustainable land management – not further intensification
- Connecting environmental issues to what other people care about and showing that our vision is part of their vision for the future of the UK

Concern was raised that the right to access the countryside could be reduced as a result of Brexit and that this issue is being given less focus at the moment. If people can't access the countryside, they will care less about how it is managed.

ELUK members agreed on the importance of getting simple key messages out and raised concerns that, as a sector, we wait until we have all the detail available before we communicate our views and messages. Sectors who are advocating the opposite of what we would like to see are communicating their views loud and clear, so we need to be confident in communicating our messages whilst the detail is worked out. We must also move forward positively where there are opportunities, such as around land management. Our counterparts in the EU also need to hear these messages and it is important to show Government that we are engaged with what the public wants.

### Next steps

1. **Identify the key issues** arising from Brexit that ELUK members want to work together on.
2. **Crystalize our messaging** – what are the simple, common messages that all ELUK members want the public to hear?
3. **Identify a process** for continued liaison and productive joint working across the UK on these issues.

**Dr Eurgain Powell, Policy Adviser, Office of the Future Generations**  
**Commissioner: *What the Well-being of Future Generations Act means for Wales***  
**(slides provided)**

Dr Powell described the main aspects of the Well-being of Future Generations Act and what it will mean for Wales, including the role of the Future Generations Commission – an office established by the Act. The key aspects of this Act are:

- **the well-being duty** – for all public bodies (including the Welsh Government) in Wales to carry out sustainable development and set well-being objectives in order to achieve...
- ...the **seven well-being goals**: A prosperous Wales, A resilient Wales, A healthier Wales, A more equal Wales, A Wales of cohesive communities, A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language, A globally responsible Wales;
- the **sustainable development principle** that, “the body must act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” and by using ways of working that are long-term, preventive, integrated, collaborative and involve stakeholders;
- the **establishment of statutory Public Service Boards** in each local authority in Wales, with four statutory members including the local authority, plus invited participants (Natural Resources Wales is one of the statutory members);
- Public Service Boards must do assessments of well-being in their areas and then produce **local well-being plans**, which should include environmental well-being; and
- establishment of an **independent Future Generations Commissioner** to be “...a guardian of the ability of future generations to meet their needs...” – the Commissioner is in post for seven years and has a balance of support and challenge functions.

## Discussion and questions

There was positive feedback from the Links from outside Wales in regard to the purpose and principles of this Act. The following questions were asked:

- How does the Act take account of the UN Sustainable Development Goals?
- How will civil society be engaged with the Act?
- Where does the buck stop in terms of deciding on priorities between the goals – do certain organisations have more responsibility for certain goals?
- Does the Act have teeth?
- Has the Act had an effect on the Welsh Government’s Programme for Government?

Dr Powell explained that the Act was developed in parallel with the UN SDGs and now that the National Indicators are published, these have been mapped across to the SDGs. In terms of the engagement of civil society, the previous non-statutory Sustainable Futures Commissioner for Wales conducted a national conversation on The Wales We Want, gathering views from all sectors of civil society on what they see as important for a sustainable Wales. This national conversation is set to continue under the new Commissioner.

In terms of the Act having teeth, this is still to be determined, with analyses of the Programme for Government, the budget and the forthcoming Government well-being objectives to be analysed in the coming weeks. The question of levels of responsibility is still an interesting one to work out in practice. Organisations do have to work towards all the goals, however, not focus on only a few of them.

## Tuesday 4 October – Workshops (as reported)

### **Circular Economy (slides provided)**

- One Planet living target for Wales Waste Strategy = absolute goal - discussion
- Remanufacturing in Wales – opportunities – discussion – role for social enterprise/3<sup>rd</sup> sector
- Procurement in Welsh Government – is there a duty for Wales to be more resource efficient? Waste Strategy Branch liaising with the team in Value Wales in relation to developing a procurement hierarchy for resource efficiency
- Issues with public sector procurement model and barriers to circular economy – discussion
- Biological Materials / bio-plastics opportunities discussion
- Explicitly how can food waste reduction positively impact on the environment? Reduced pressure on agricultural land.
- Have there been any innovative approaches for food waste?
- Unification of the composition of plastics – what happens to recycle? Where does it go?
- What powers do Environment Link membership organisations have in bringing about change? Huge membership that plays its part in consuming natural resources and producing waste, this can be harnessed.
- Education – Eco schools initiatives – funding opportunities

### **Marine**

#### **MPAs**

Country updates:

##### **Wales**

- Welsh Government are due to publish a JNCC produced gap analysis by the end of October, it is understood that there will be very little engagement once published
- Expecting the designation of six new EMS around Wales (three SACs and three SPAs)
- There is no plan to extend the current MPA management review of Welsh sites
- Welsh Government are currently working on a Welsh fisheries matrix which expected to be completed and published in November

##### **Scotland**

- Harbour porpoise SAC announced last week, SEL are pushing for more sites
- Consultation on ten new SPAs has just closed for the Scottish inshore, SEL have written to DEFRA regarding offshore sites
- SEL are currently pushing the use of research areas as enabled by the Marine Act (Scotland)
- Currently awaiting the next consultation round for national MPAs
- Fisheries management is now in place for 20 sites, with the remaining sites expected by the end of the year

## **England**

- Currently awaiting the third JNCC UK wide gap analysis, expected by the end of the month. This will guide the Tranche 3 MCZ process
- It is likely that new features will be added to existing MCZs and SACs in addition to up to 50 new MCZs
- Europe has started proceedings against the UK over the lack of sites for harbour porpoise
- “The revised approach” how fisheries are dealt with in EMS is expected to be completed by the end of 2017 with MCZs included by the end of 2020

## **Northern Ireland**

- Tranche 1 of the MCZ process ended in December last year, expecting the designation of four sites in the next few weeks
- Tranche 2 is expected to cover horse mussel beds
- Currently awaiting the JNCC gap analysis to identify additional sites that should be consulted on next year
- There are currently only two management plans for EMS sites. An INTERREG bid has been submitted to develop plans for all other sites

## **What would an ECN look like in the UK?**

### **Group 1**

- Scotland are currently concentrating on management instead of gaps
- Unclear what a final ECN will be as countries are all at different stages of designation/management
- Have the Joint Links ECN narrative but does not fully say what we envision a full ECN will look like
- Need to await JNCC gap analysis reports to ascertain if there are any gaps, proposed a joint analysis to provide a clear understanding for all to develop our knowledge base
- Clear communications for coherence within the network e.g. offshore Wales, no matter who designates mud habitats are needed
- Needs to be clear protocols for data gathering and enforcement
- Institute best practice methods, such the sharing of knowledge (at a high level) and wider communications and engagement

### **Group 2**

- Scotland needs both offshore SACs and SPAs along with 4 NCMPAs. Northern Ireland are missing the West sea area, there are uncertainties around gaps in Scottish waters as they are not part of any gap analysis
- Have the ELUK core narrative that can show what we expect from a ECN but does not give a definitive expectation
- Tranche 3 England gaps focus on mobile species and mud habitats
- There are known gaps in the offshore Wales area, the Irish Government need to be involved in the designation process
- New JNCC gap analysis should be better than previous iterations and be done at a biogeographical region scale, question of if we get all of these sites will we have an ECN? The JNCC review focuses on England (Scotland is not in the analysis) but it will be useful to look at the methodology for other areas.
- Need to push domestic gaps and filling them, OSPAR is critical in maintaining international sites after BREXIT
- Need for commonality in the definition of ECN and need standards for measuring representatively i.e. different marine plans define ECN differently.

## **Actions**

- Critical analysis of the JNCC gap analyses
- Each country to produce a summary of where they are in terms of designation and management
- Amend and update the ECN core narrative as needed
- Have regular Link catch ups

## **Management, monitoring, enforcement and best practice, how has your country progressed this?**

### **Group 1**

- All of the discussions on this are in the context of resource limitations
- Scotland are awaiting a monitoring strategy and prioritising the management of existing sites
- Issues in Scotland include illegal fishing (and the issues with enforcement and monitoring) and public monitoring and engagement (lack of understanding and limited benefits for enforcement, there are no defined data standards for ecological data so not all monitoring is useful)
- Wales has some good examples of monitoring such as in Skomer MCZ where NRW have a permanent presence, however monitoring, data collection and enforcement across Wales is largely under resourced
- WWF is working with industry to help improve standards, such as using regulatory drivers such as the discards ban and new camera technology ([http://www.wwf.org.uk/about\\_wwf/press\\_centre/?unewsid=7811](http://www.wwf.org.uk/about_wwf/press_centre/?unewsid=7811))
- The Celtic Seas Partnership has produced best practise guidelines to help marine management on 'conflict resolution', 'co-location of marine renewables with other interests' and 'transboundary governance'
- The Fishing4Data initiative are fishers, producers, buyers and government working together on "*A strategy to make industry collected data scientifically credible and salient to inform policy and its implementation*"
- In England a lot of money goes into monitoring and enforcement of activity but funds for ecological monitoring are limited, this is because DEFRA are concentrating on designation of MPAs first and monitoring will follow (i.e. WLT have 10 staff working with the IFCA's).

### **Group 2**

- There is a need to make it very clear what the legal requirements are for sites especially with risks from BREXIT
- Monitoring strategies need to demonstrate the benefits of effective management, this includes factors such as appropriate fines for damaging activity and the use of technologies such as VMS to ensure compliance
- In England the DEFRA "revised approach" is fundamental to fisheries management
- Scotland's "Don't take the P" campaign has proved successful enabling the closure of 2600m of seabed to dredging (all inshore SAC's are closed to dredging)
- Offshore sites for fisheries management are very slow at developing management plans
- Northern Ireland are now using stakeholder led workshops to determine the management of SACs and SPAs, however other Northern Ireland sites are simply "paper parks" with no enforcement
- The management and monitoring of Welsh MPAs is very poor due to resource constraints and lack of political will. In comparison to England, Wales spends



proportionally a lot less - where does the treasury money go? £2M on Welsh fisheries compared to £2M for each IFCA.

- Stakeholder and industry buy-in for many MPAs needs to be managed

### **Actions**

- It is important that there is stakeholder and industry buy in to the management this is where projects such as the Celtic Seas Partnership can be utilised
- Ensure that the legal requirements of the sites are adhered to and that fines and disincentives are appropriate
- A coherent data standard to enable use of publically collected data
- Provide solutions for the issues to civil servants

### **Marine Planning**

Country updates:

#### **Wales**

- There is delayed progress on the plan with a formal consultation on the draft plan now expected in early-mid 2017
- The vision of the plan is currently good, but there is uncertainty with the fine details specifically the long term sustainability of the vision
- There is currently a political push for tidal lagoons and this is being worked into the plan

#### **Scotland**

- The national plan was published last year and parts of it were welcomed such as dealing with cumulative impacts, however there are issues such as the economic need to increase aquaculture. Nested underneath this are non-statutory regional plans.
- Shetland has probably the best example of a best practice marine plan (3<sup>rd</sup> iteration) due to the quality of stakeholder engagement.
- There are thirteen marine regions in Scotland and it is possible that there will be a plan for each area
- Fisheries management needs to be imbedded into marine planning in Scotland as currently it is not
- The Sea Scotland Conference was a good opportunity to broaden interest in marine planning

#### **England**

- There are currently two published plans for the North Sea and Eastern English channel, it is the MMO that is responsible for writing plans and it has just been stated that all remaining plans will be published at once by the end of next year. The plans map out what is currently happening rather than providing a framework to decide on future development.
- NGOs are no longer attending meetings due to disengagement and it is stated that England is not a good example of best practice
- There is currently in development a report to show the differences between the two English plans and the Scottish and Shetlands ones

#### **Northern Ireland**

- The marine plan has been delayed for two years and it is now expected by Christmas
- There is likely to be no zoning of activities or restrictions put in place and it is expected that fisheries will not be included within the plan at all
- The plan is not expected to be prescriptive but instead a simple document that states what is going on in the Northern Ireland area

## **What would an ideal marine plan look like?**

### **Group 1**

- Needs to take care of resources which will be the basis of goods and services taking a 25 year view
- Plans need to be locally relevant taking into account the three elements of sustainability and have a strategic overview
- Plans should incorporate policies on cumulative impacts (based on biological thresholds) and work with wider legislation
- The plan should take full account of the best possible evidence such as biodiversity and create baselines, providing processes for monitoring. It should also utilise the precautionary principle when evidence is not available and acknowledge gaps and targets for biodiversity
- There should be clear roles and responsibilities for the users of the plan to fill knowledge gaps

### **Group 2**

- Plans need to fully embed the ecosystem based approach, the Shetlands plan is the closest we currently have to this
- Australia could be used as an external example of marine planning as authorities there have to carry out strategic integrated assessments
- Marine Scotland have a central role of looking at Scottish seas this is useful to maintain an overview
- Embed a green thread throughout plans and environmental hurdles to be overcome upfront of the plans
- Utilise useful documents such as living with the seas (SEL) three pillars approach (Marine Scotland) and marine planning and GES paper (WEL)
- Plans should not just constraint map but also identify areas for improvement
- Fishing activities should be embedded within plans
- Plans should consider the protected area network as a whole and should also consider the wider environment and achievement of GES
- Should not just focus on protected areas but also consider other important areas

### **Actions**

- Plans should have a strong evidence base underpinning them
- Plans should emphasise the natural resources
- Plans should have policies on cumulative impacts
- Plans should embed the ecosystem based approach at the start and continue throughout
- Plans should set upfront the environmental hurdles
- We should make best use of the current reports and resources previously stated
- Plans should identify areas for improvement and recovery and take account of the wider environmental considerations

## **How can we influence the marine planning process to achieve this vision?**

### **Group 1**

- Need to influence the marine planning process at all stages
- The time and opportunities to engage are based on coproduction (what and how to input)
- There needs to be clear vision, leadership and resources to engage properly

- Utilise campaigning to apply public pressure to ensure full engagement in the plan, also ensure full engagement with steering group writing the plan
- Need to ensure that there is capacity for us to engage
- To ensure a good planning process there needs to be leadership, ownership and partnership (e.g. what Shetland has)

## **Group 2**

- Be on a planning partnership to help write the plan and input into the drafting process (such as WEL are)
- Produce reports and/or briefing documents for politicians to get them engaged in the process
- Campaigning to engage with stakeholders about the process
- Learn from each plan to build on them and improve them, plans are also circular and can be improved
- Engage fully with government departments and delivery partners to ensure sharing of information and understanding and everyone is working towards the same vision
- Organise conferences to discuss specifics of planning
- Could challenge marine plans to set case law and improve plans (can push for independent scrutiny) or could challenge development within a marine plan area

## **Actions**

- Ensure we are represented on any stakeholder drafting group
- Organise conferences and create reports to “sell” the vision of the plan
- Revisiting and reviewing plans during the circular review process
- Where necessary utilise independent investigations to test and improve plans
- Use campaigning to apply public pressure on the relevant authority
- Ensure there is enough capacity to fully scrutinise the plans
- Ensure that marine plans adhere to the Marine Policy Statement
- Ensure there is strong leadership, ownership and partnership in the development of marine plans

## **Natural Capital**

### **Discussion around what we mean by Natural Capital**

- Attempt to bring biodiversity conservation into mainstream by giving it a currency
- Taking stock of biodiversity
- Putting value on biodiversity
- Not about economics – is it about the whole of nature or only about nature that we utilise?
- In Wales they talk about ‘natural resources’ but is this the same as natural capital?
- Putting a price on services provided

We also identified difference between: Natural Capital – the physical assets vs Natural Capital Accounting – putting a value on nature.

### **Summary of activity in each country**

Northern Ireland – NIEL conference on *Delivering Prosperity through the Environment*. Speakers included Professor Jane Stout (Irish Forum on Natural Capital); Simon Rennie (Central Scotland Green Network Trust); and Roddy Fairley (Scottish Natural Heritage).

Ireland – The Irish Forum on Natural Capital brings together a diverse range of organisations and individuals from academic, public, private and NGO sectors who are interested in the development and application of the natural capital agenda in Ireland

(<http://www.naturalcapitalireland.com/>)

Wales - Welsh Government don't use the term 'capital' they use 'resilience' – eg. *a more resilient Wales*. The new Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 has goal of *maintaining and enhancing a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems*.

Scotland – Scottish Wildlife Trust organised the World Forum on Natural Capital and established the Scottish Forum on Natural Capital. SEL held a workshop on Ecosystem Services and Natural Capital – paper available from [phoebe@scotlink.org](mailto:phoebe@scotlink.org)

England – Green Alliance published a report on Natural Capital ([http://www.green-alliance.org.uk/natural\\_partners.php](http://www.green-alliance.org.uk/natural_partners.php)). WCL blog post on Natural Capital (<http://www.wcl.org.uk/nature-is-not-only-natural-capital.asp>)

British Ecological Society – involved in Natural Capital Initiative, a joint initiative with CEH, Society of Biologists and the James Hutton Institute to bring together people from academia, policy, business and civil society.

Woodland Trust has developed an Urban Tree Inventory to put a value on services that urban trees provide.

## Concerns

Several people raised concerns over the Natural Capital approach

- Biodiversity does not equal ecosystem services
- Business see 'capital' as something to be owned and traded whereas biodiversity/natural capital is a shared resource
- Scottish approach with the Natural Capital Index is being touted as a measure of biodiversity but the index contradicts the evidences in the State of Nature Report
- Blindly following an ecosystem services approach to monetarise the value of nature is dangerous. For example a pristine ancient woodland provides a similar water retention service to an ancient woodland invaded by Rhododendron
- If we are putting a value on nature we need to be clear about what we're valuing. For example, it's not the value of the bees themselves, it's the value of the pollination services that they provide
- Problem with monetising nature is that it can be used to 'buy' development
- Natural Capital is not a tradable commodity
- Important not to forget the ecosystem services that you can't put a value on eg landscapes, cultural, etc.
- Danger of turning nature into a commodity, but need to truly value what we've got
- In danger of completely ignoring those parts of biodiversity that don't provide a service
- The economy is a wholly owned subsidiary of the environment and not the other way around
- Need to maintain that it's not about putting financial value on all of nature

## Opportunities

- Water company – paying landowners to plant trees rather than farm the land as it's cheaper to pay them not to farm than it is to remove chemicals from the water

- Natural Capital – useful to use economic arguments to get business and government to use natural solutions more eg. natural flood management
- Natural Capital is a tool that should be used in conjunction with other nature conservation tools.
- Natural Capital could get biodiversity to the table
- Businesses start off by looking at their self-interest but can be persuaded to consider wider impacts and benefits.
- How do we value what we seek to protect and get others to value it equally?
- 'Currency' should be the state of nature i.e. status of threatened species
- State of biodiversity is key indicator of healthy ecosystems. A decline in biodiversity means ecosystems aren't resilient.

### **Language is key**

In Wales they don't talk about Natural Capital – they talk about resilience, but farmers don't necessarily understand resilience or natural capital! We need to be talking to farmers about prosperity and public good.

We need to be careful of oversimplification distorting our message. For example, whilst the decline in pollinators has caught the attention of the public and politicians, the simplification of the message has meant that the focus has been on a single domesticated species – the honey bee instead of the 2,000+ other species of wild pollinators.

Finally, we need to engage with the Natural Capital debate to make sure that we get the outcome we want.

### **Sustainable Land Management, Farming and Food**

This workshop explored what constitutes the essential components of a sustainable land management policy. Delegates considered some of the processes used by ELUK's counterparts in order to try to achieve sustainable land use policies; what policy recommendations have been incorporated; and what developments have been made with regard to fully integrating land use policies with food, farming, and other related sectors. In the light of Brexit, we drew on the latest post-CAP thinking, and discussed some of the risks posed by the possibility of UK-wide legislation, and how we can ensure progressive environmental standards can fit across the devolved administrations while negotiating our way out of Europe.

*This is an attempt to capture all the flipchart notes from both workshops in a unified way laid out under the six areas covered in the above paragraph.*

#### **1. Essential components:**

- Soil health
- Water health
- Biodiversity outcomes
- Climate change contribution
- Evidence base
- Landscape Distinctiveness – (defining key elements – visual, cultural, historical)
- Access provision and improvements – it's the public experience/interaction

There was much discussion about whole supply chain:

- Public health – sustainable diets (e.g. Square Meal report <http://foodresearch.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/squaremealfinalpdf-1.pdf> or Plenty report <http://www.nourishscotland.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/PLENTY-final.pdf>)
- Food equality
- Food chain infrastructure – sharing income across the food chain
- Consumer insight
- Food Waste – on farm and in food chain
  
- Levers/mechanisms/incentives and regulation
- How are incentives (payments) calculated?
- Incentivising right action
- Learning feedback – engagement with land managers/sharing development of thought with land managers
- Getting buy-in from land managers/owners – approach farmers as land managers
- Integration of nature in to business plans
- Protection of rural livelihoods/communities
- Localism – devolution of policies to make them relevant

There was discussion in both groups about role of land use planning but probably beyond scope of this exercise:

- Land use as step beyond land management
- Right land use in right place
- Value of natural resources vs value of land use

## 2. Processes

- Scotland – 1st iteration was a policy response not a strategy <http://www.scotlink.org/files/publication/LINKReports/LINKReportLivingwithLand.pdf>
- 2<sup>nd</sup> iteration by Scottish Government was more regional, involved stakeholders, included spatial planning and intended as a decision making tool. Also mixed up with land reform agenda and land rights & responsibilities <http://www.scotlink.org/public-documents/link-response-to-consultation-on-the-future-of-land-reform-in-scotland/>.
- Latest SEL land use consultation response: <http://www.scotlink.org/public-documents/link-response-to-the-scottish-government-draft-land-use-strategy-2016-2021/>
- England land use is spatial planning rather than about land management with WCL focus on Farming Fit for the Future. [http://www.wcl.org.uk/docs/farming\\_fit\\_for\\_future\\_vision.pdf](http://www.wcl.org.uk/docs/farming_fit_for_future_vision.pdf)
- Northern Ireland Government launched its Sustainable Agricultural Land Management Policy on 21<sup>st</sup> October <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/16.17.079b%20Sustainable%20Land%20Management%20Strategy%20%28Summary%29%20Final.PDF>  
This initiative will potentially have significant and long lasting impacts on land use in NI and is all geared towards boosting grass productivity, which could be utterly catastrophic for currently undesignated areas of semi-natural habitat.

There were discussions around:

- Political stance/motivation of landowners

- The land is owned but who owns the landscape (links to the public goods provided by land)
- Re-casting the discourse around land use and presentation of messages we want to get across

### **3. Key policy recommendations/outcomes**

- Highlighting bad policy – why is current situation unsustainable
- Policy on all services land provides

Brexit implications

### **4. UK wide vs devolved – risks and opportunities**

- The likely tensions if policies are a UK or devolved level
- The different language used in the different countries about the same thing but also that are different e.g. natural capital not same as natural resources
- Impact of country legislation on any UK framework

### **5. What fits across the UK**

- ELUK need to clarify the unifying themes
- Use of practical examples from across UK. Value of peer demonstration
- Re-visit the language of diversification/ multifunctional land use

**ACTION: Each Link to clarify what they want for land management in any Brexit resolution.**