



Peatland Workshop

February 21st 2014
Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation

Workshop One – Strategic Spending

Workshop Notes

The workshop discussion aimed to discuss LINK's recommendations and potential advocacy on a strategy for peatland restoration and management. This is timely because of the funds promised for restoration from Scottish Government (£15m) in the Peatland Action fund, and the forthcoming SNH consultation on its Peatland Plan (Mar 2013).

Big issues and unanswered questions

- How do we reward landowners for maintaining peatlands in a good condition?
 - Currently SRDP and other funding mechanisms pay landowners to restore only.
 - Support for this in the future potentially from:
 - Peatland Carbon Code
 - CAP addressing this in future reform
 - Potential ACTIONS
 - LINK to make the case for support which rewards maintenance. Work with partners such as NFUS. Raise the debate and seek an ongoing conversation.
 - Add this recommendation into LINK ATF consultation response and briefings on CAP Pillar 1.
- What will be the relationship between Peatland Action and SRDP? Will these pots of money be separate and fund separate work?
 - LINK recommends that Peatland Action funds are spent in focussed areas whereas SRDP Moorland Management option is used targeted within a wider area.
 - Clarity is needed from SNH on these plans.

Approaches

LINK recommends:

- Restoring a variety of damage types. However, the high cost of tree removal and associated high cost of ongoing management after felling means we don't recommend a large hectareage of tree removal being attempted under these funds.
- Projects should aim to realise mosaics within landscapes where appropriate – a mechanism to make this happen may be needed.
- Projects funded under Peatland Action must be monitored in order to assess value for money and learn lessons.
- Connections should be made with the Peatland Carbon Code, including:
 - Recognising projects under the Code
 - Investigating the potential for using the compliance mechanism in the Code more widely.
- **Focus areas** should be identified across Scotland to concentrate restoration effort.
 - Potential areas identified include:
 - Shetland
 - Lewis

- Flow Country
- Coigach - Assynt
- Cairngorms/Monadhliaths
- Loch Lomond and Trossachs
- East Scotland - raised bogs
- Central belt - raised bogs
- Galloway
- Southern Uplands
- Focus areas could aim to focus on particular sectors (although not exclusively), e.g. water quality in Galloway or raised bogs in the Central Belt. Sectors/issues include:
 - Drinking water
 - Catchment management
 - Tree removal – and restocking issues
 - Overgrazing by sheep
 - Raised bog restoration
- Lead organisations should be identified in each focus area – some already exist in these areas and are already leading work. For example the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park is recruiting a Peatland Restoration Officer.
- Focus areas need a dedicated person to coordinate action, engage landowners, bring in other funding, monitor action, multiply benefits, spread the messages etc. The Peatland Action fund must pay for these salaried staff. This modal has worked well in the Yorkshire Peatlands Partnership.

Communication

- LINK can play a role with others, in:
 - Calling for changes to policies which affect peatlands
 - Making the case for peatland restoration and maintenance by communicating the evidence of benefits of members work through monitoring activities and impacts.
 - Raising the debate with the public and with decision-makers.

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Feb 2014