

Developing place based approaches for payments for ecosystem services

IN THE ENGLISH UPLANDS

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A DEFRA and Natural England
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Centre

Providing a practical, market-based application of the ecosystems approach in English uplands

SUMMARY

This project focuses on how to develop place-based approaches for Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES). In this study we will focus on doing this in England's upland areas. It aims to provide a practical, market-based application of the ecosystems approach introduced in the Government's recent Natural Environment White Paper. It builds on the evidence base generated through Natural England's Ecosystem Service Pilots to identify, quantify, value and enhance packages of ecosystem services, working collaboratively with partners, farmers and other land managers. Specifically, it will:

- Review the current baseline and trend in ecosystem service provision;
- Assess the opportunity to improve a range of key ecosystem services through land management actions
- Identify potential beneficiaries of these ecosystem services;
- Develop metrics for measuring and modeling key ecosystem services;
- Review the institutional context and mechanisms to enable PES and
- Evaluate the overall feasibility of setting up a place-based PES scheme delivering either a layered or bundled PES scheme in an English upland context.



The ecosystem services that will be included in the current piece of work are likely to include carbon sequestration, water quality, freshwater, flood risk reduction, biodiversity and recreation.

Given the importance of carbon storage and sequestration in the uplands, this will be a particular focus of this work. Through being market-oriented, this project will identify, quantify and value the saleable carbon from a specific area of peatland, and consider how marketing carbon can be combined with other possible marketable services. It will explore the development of metrics to underpin a voluntary peatland carbon code, building upon the evidence recently reviewed by the IUCN Peatland Programme in its Commission of Inquiry on Peatlands.

The research is being developed and funded by Natural England and DEFRA, and is led by the Crichton Carbon Centre in collaboration with IUCN Peatland Programme, URS and Birmingham City University, with advisory inputs from the Environment Bank. The research runs from September 2012 to March 2013. The project is being undertaken on the basis of analyzing existing data, rather than primary data gathering.