

Re-thinking  
policy impact

# What is policy impact?

What is the evidence that public money leads to public goods delivery from agri-environment schemes?



## Key messages

- There is strong evidence that public goods including climate change mitigation, improved water quality and soil health can be provided by several on-farm interventions, such as watercourse fencing to exclude livestock, conservation tillage and planting hedges in arable land
- However, for the majority of options and public goods investigated, evidence was mixed or weak, and it was not possible to assess the magnitude or rate of change, requiring more research
- There are policy options that could prioritise public money for public goods that can most reliably be delivered, while developing the evidence-base for interventions that are feasible on-farm via Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) pilot trials



NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS: RHETORIC OR REALITY? 51

## Tenancies

125. Tenancy arrangements can be a barrier to tenant farmers implementing nature-based solutions. Tenant farmers work around 30% of land in the UK.<sup>255</sup> But their tenancy contracts can contain clauses that require them to manage land only for agricultural purposes.<sup>256</sup> There is also little motivation for tenants to invest in nature-based solutions if the long-term benefits will accrue to the landowner rather than to them. We heard that this can incentivise suboptimal land management, because the focus is on generating profit from the land in the short term.<sup>257</sup> Furthermore, short term tenancy contracts mean that tenant farmers do not have sufficient time to oversee changes in land use. Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park acknowledged that the Government would "not be able to meet our targets" without the full involvement of tenant farmers, but that he would "not pretend that we [the Government] have resolved those issues."<sup>258</sup>
126. **Professor Mark Reed**, the Professor in Rural Entrepreneurship, at Scotland's Rural College, told us of a possible solution. There are "contractual arrangements" where "the units are owned by the landowner" but where the "benefits" are shared between landowners and tenants.<sup>259</sup>
127. **Tenancy contracts impede the implementation of nature-based solutions. More flexibility in these contracts is needed for the Government's schemes to be a success.**
128. **We recommend that the Government urgently addresses the barriers tenant farmers face to engage with the Environmental Land Management Schemes. This could include mechanisms for landlords and tenants to negotiate arrangements that allow them to share the costs and benefits of improvements.**

## Supply chains

129. We heard concerns that an insufficient supply of the resources needed for nature-based solutions could slow their adoption. From Dr Waring, we heard concern about ensuring sufficient "nurseries and ... seed stock to support the scale of expansion".<sup>260</sup> Dr Lisa Norton told us that for "productive, species-rich grassland", it is "difficult to get hold of suitable seed."<sup>261</sup> Relying on overseas imports of trees risks importing pathogens. Professor David Coomes said that "there are horrifying statistics about how many new pests and diseases arrive each day" and he urged the Government to counter these risks with phytosanitary measures.<sup>262</sup> We have already emphasised the importance of resilience, and imported diseases threaten the long-term future of many trees.
130. **We recommend that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs supports the domestic industry for seeds and saplings and only imports bio-secure seeds and saplings where necessary, and with stringent phytosanitary safeguards.**

<sup>255</sup> House of Commons Library, Tenant Farmers, Library Note SN/SC/1337, May 2010

<sup>256</sup> Written evidence from the NFU (NSD0017)

<sup>257</sup> Q.13 (Professor Chris Collins)

<sup>258</sup> Q.141 (Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park)

<sup>259</sup> Q.180 (Professor Mark Reed)

<sup>260</sup> Q.2 (Dr Bonnie Waring)

<sup>261</sup> Q.13 (Dr Lisa Norton)

<sup>262</sup> Q.6 (Professor David Coomes)

Understanding  
and awareness



Attitudinal



Economic



Environmental



Policy



Other social



Capacity or  
preparedness



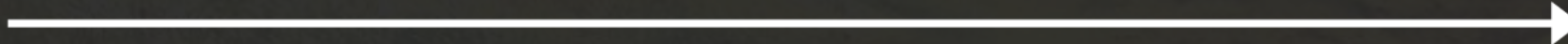
Other forms of  
decision-making and  
behaviour change impacts



Health and  
Well-being



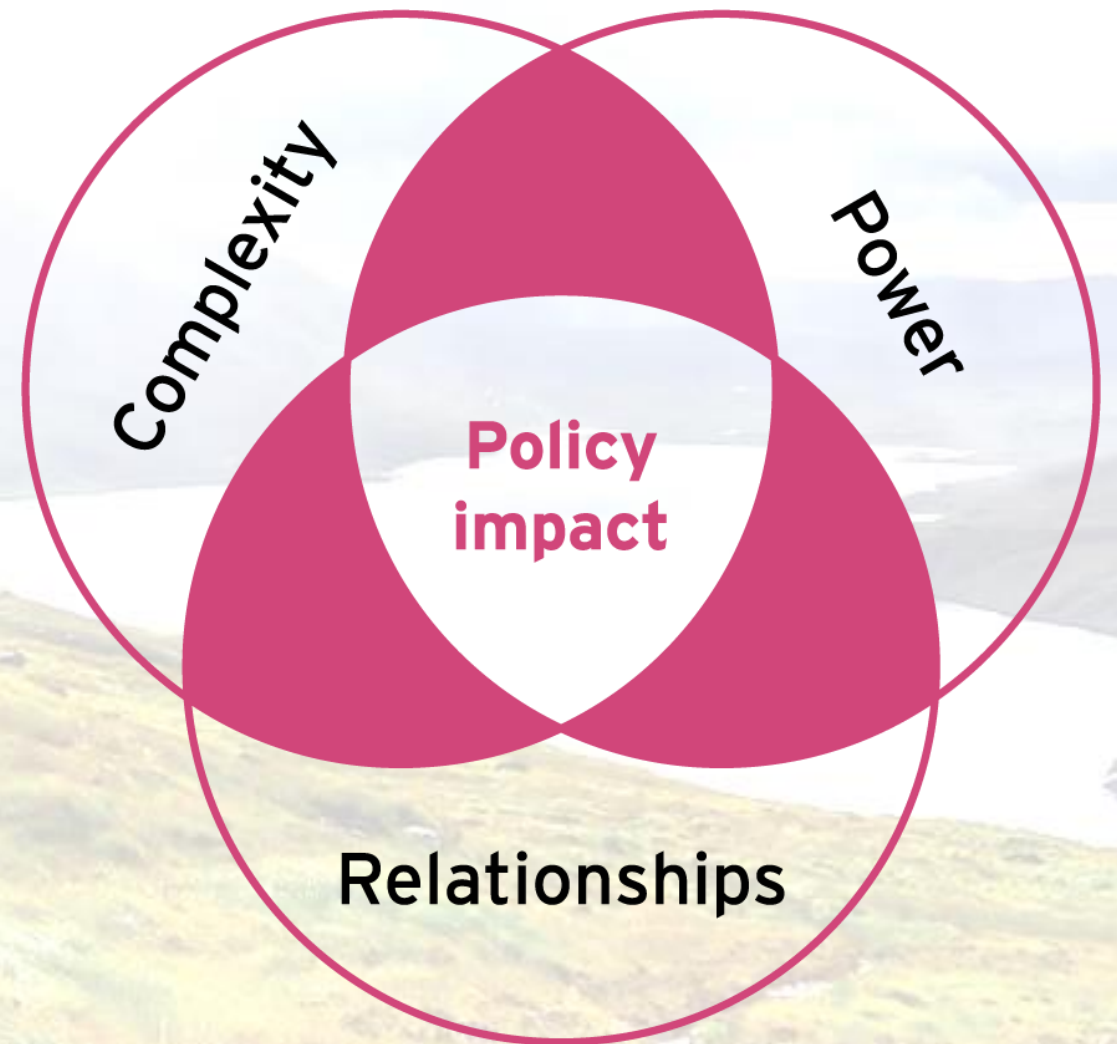
Cultural



# There is no such thing as (purely) evidence-based policy



# Responsible policy impact



# Who's relevant? 3i's

1. Who is interested (or not)?
2. Who has influence (to facilitate or block impact) or not?
3. Who is impacted (positively or negatively)?

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Research article

## Analyzing who is relevant to engage in environmental decision-making processes by interests, influence and impact: The 3i framework

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Part of a collection:  
Concepts, Methodology, and Knowledge

## 1

News story

## Budget 2020: What you need to know

Measures announced by Chancellor Rishi Sunak in the Budget.

Published 11 March 2020

From: [HM Treasury](#) and [The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP](#)



## 6. Green priorities and protecting the planet for the future

- Flood defence investment of a record £5.2 billion over six years will better protect 336,000 properties
- £39 million in the Environment Agency's network of water supply and water navigation assets
- £500 million to support the rollout of super-fast electric vehicle charging network
- £533 million to extend Plug-in Grant schemes for ultra-low emission vehicles to 2023.
- We will establish Carbon Capture and Storage in two sites to capture CO2 emissions before they are released into the atmosphere.
- Launching a new £100m scheme to help households and small businesses invest in low carbon heating systems, and consulting on introducing a Green Gas Levy to increase biomethane production for the gas grid
- A Green Heat Networks scheme to encourage new and existing heat networks to adopt low carbon heat sources, backed by £270 million funding.
- £640m Nature for Climate Fund to plant more than 40 million trees and restore 35,000 hectares of peatland in England
- Up to £25m to create the Nature Recovery Network in England

Credible link between  
policy and research (even  
if not cited)



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Options

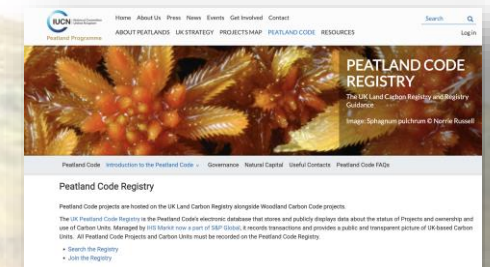
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## Evidence used in credible pathways

4

## Implementation and benefits

## Testimonial to prove causal link





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