

# Nature Improvement Areas Best Practice Event: Ecosystem Services and the Ecosystem Approach

*Hosted by: South Downs Way Ahead NIA*

**25 & 26 September 2013**

## Presentations, Notes and Actions



### Introduction

Over forty people, from ten Nature Improvement Areas (NIAs), participated in this Best Practise Network event. This was the third NIAs best practise event and focused on the ecosystem approach and ecosystem services. Previous best practise events addressed NIAs and the planning system and NIAs and Grasslands.

There has been increased attention recently on our need to restore and enhance our increasingly pressured ecosystems, a principal behind the creation of NIAs who are all developing and testing approaches to see what works best in their localities, and to share the learning nationally and internationally.

Over the two days of the event participants heard from a range of speakers addressing the ecosystems approach, payment for ecosystem services/innovative funding, the cultural and spiritual aspects of nature and an in-depth look at a range of activity underway in the South Downs NIA. Particular attention on how the South Downs NIA is approaching integrated land and water management and how it engages people and communities in making choices was superbly illustrated by a number of local contributors in the nation's newest National Park.

In the following pages presentations and brief notes from each session are outlined, hopefully giving some flavour of how we and the South Downs Way Ahead NIA are progressing our shared ambition to improve ecological coherence and making space for nature at the landscape scale. Further information is provided at the end of this report. We hope to continue these discussions and welcome your contribution to the ongoing progress we are making.

The event was superbly hosted by staff from the South Downs National Park & South Downs Way Ahead NIA partnership. I would like to thank all who contributed to the success of the event, and particularly Ayla Forbes, Emily Brennan and Nigel James.

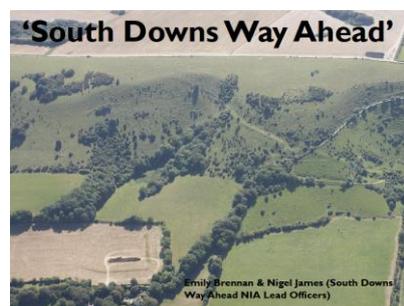
*Brian McDonald, Nature Improvement Areas Programme Manager.*

## **South Downs Way Ahead NIA overview** *Nigel James, South Downs Way Ahead NIA*

Key points:

- The NIA is accelerating, complimenting and catalysing action to improve the quality of the environment in line with the NIA ambition, e.g. around water quality and land management.
- Partnership is key, bringing all the necessary players and piecing these together with collaborative actions.
- Legacy is critical – sustaining and securing the future direction to 2020

*See accompanying presentation 1*

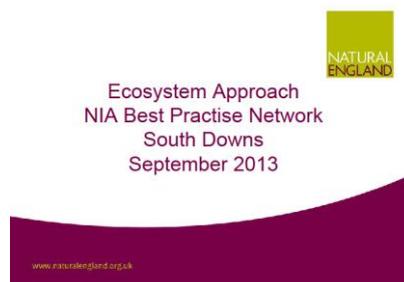


## **Setting the Scene: Overview of the Ecosystem approach,** *Brian McDonald, Natural England*

Key points:

- The ecosystems approach is a strategy for **integrated** sustainable land and sea management that considers the whole ecosystem.
- **3 key elements:**
  - Ecosystems** and their links to adjacent ecosystems.
  - Puts **people** at the heart of environmental management
  - Value** of nature to people recognised as ecosystem goods and services

*See accompanying presentation 2*



## ***Payment for Ecosystem Services***      *Helen Dunn, Defra*

Key points:

- PES works on a beneficiaries pays principle
- PES opportunities do not generally exist in isolation but must respect wider strategies and plans in the target area, to which they could add value
- Need to communicate with many stakeholders in simple, intuitive terms. Importance of trusted intermediaries / facilitators of PES
- Need to find ways to combine multiple sources of funding from a range of beneficiaries

*See accompanying presentation 3*



*South Downs Way Ahead NIA  
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**Developing the potential for payments for  
ecosystem services**

25<sup>th</sup> September 2013

**Helen Dunn**  
Senior Economic Advisor, Ecosystems Strategy & Evidence  
UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

## ***Feedback from NIAs Year 1 M&E and Next Steps*** *Chris Hill, GeoData Institute and Rebecca Jackson-Pitt, Natural England*

Key points:

- Protocols to be reviewed and concluded November 2013
- Online tool reviewed and completed for 2013/14 input by February 2014
- Concern people are not well represented, incl. people's perception, this is required to keep it real and improve the public face of NIAs.
- There will be a workshop in November focussing on Social, Economic, Health and Well Being
- Connectivity concerns, a variety of approaches exist.
  - Kent CC have a free connectivity tool, others incl. [More](#)
  - Will look into convening a national workshop on connectivity

*See accompanying presentation 4*



## Feedback from Year 1 Monitoring & Evaluation and Next Steps

Rebecca Jackson-Pitt (*Natural England*) /  
Chris Hill (*GeoData Institute*)

25<sup>th</sup> Sept 2013  
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## ***Ecosystem Services mapping within the South Downs NIA*** *Henri Brocklebank, Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre*

Key points:

- Challenges around data management, compatibility and licensing – e.g. Master Map.
- Data for NIAs and relationship with NE, EA and FC.
- Quality management and decision making needs to involve people and not solely guided by technology.

See accompanying presentation 5



### **EcoServ-GIS**

Ecosystem Services Mapping:

A Wildlife Trust GIS Toolkit to map ecosystem services  
at a county scale

Dr Jonathan Winn  
Living Landscape Coordinator  
Durham Wildlife Trust



## ***The viability and benefits of an input based approach to the improvement of groundwater quality: Emily Brennan and Nigel James, South Downs Way Ahead NIA***

Key points:

- To provide **evidence** of how sustainable/improved land management practices can improve groundwater quality. Groundwater quality failing mostly due to Nitrate Pollution. Working with land managers and water companies using data and modelling to identify actions to rectify, potential PES approach to address.
- Phase 1 - the technical modelling phase, completes January 2014.
- Phase 2 – development of an ‘advice programme’ to influence behaviour change to complete by March 2015.
- Phase 3 - Driving the appropriate ‘on the ground’ mitigation measures through partnership working.

***IT'S THE NIA THAT HAS DRIVEN THIS.***

## South Downs Collaborative Nitrate Modelling Project



See accompanying presentation 6

### **Afternoon sessions: walk and talks –**

Birling Gap to Horseshoe Plantation



- Walk along South Downs Way to Shooters' Bottom "Lighthouse to Lighthouse".



- Shooters' Bottom for High & Over



Cuckmere Meanders re-alignment – local community issues with managed retreat and re-wilding of river system.

## Day 2 Alfriston, 25 September 2013

***The challenge of aesthetic & spiritual experiences*** *Professor John Rodwell*

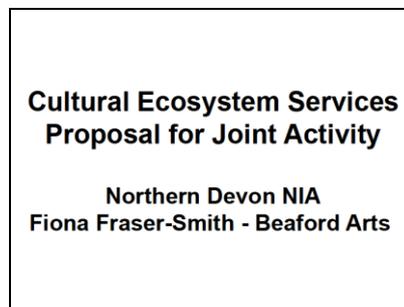
*See accompanying presentation 7*



- NERC and Biodiversity Ecosystem Services Sustainability worked with Prof. Rodwell looking into the sensory and spiritual dimensions of cultural ecosystem services.

- Qualitative aspects of ES needs to be explored and highlighted, some things are priceless and beyond the scope of quantitative analysis.
- Needs to be addressed as part of NIAs M&E which does not adequately address this area.
- Happiness and well being intrinsic and do not slot easily into GDP!

***Cultural Ecosystem Services: Proposal for joint activity***  
*Fiona Fraser-Smith Beaford Arts, Northern Devon NIA*



*See accompanying presentation 8*

Proposal for NIAs to collaborate and develop a bid for Arts Council funding for national theatre tour – [more details to follow.](#)

**Delivery and successes of Ecosystem Services projects in the South Downs Way Ahead NIA**

Neil Hulme, Butterfly Conservation

- examples of successful conservation & stunning species recovery

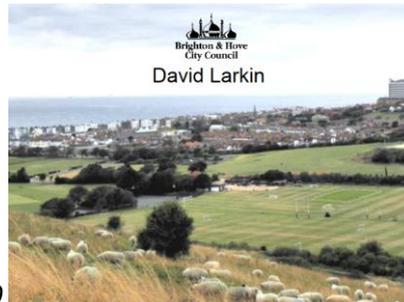
*See accompanying presentation 9*

South Downs Way Ahead NIA  
 Best Practice Event 26 September 2013  
 Alfriston, East Sussex  
 Ecosystems Services – Achievements 2012 and 2013  
 Chantry to Chanctonbury Project



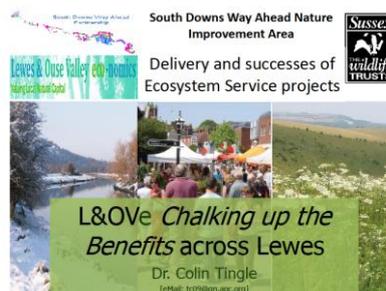
**Examples and illustration of urban focussed ecosystem activity** - David Larkin, Brighton & Hove City Council

- HLS in urban areas, rare species in unusual places ...
- Brighton & Hove ambition for UNESCO Biosphere status



See accompanying presentation 10

**Community participation, visualisation of ecosystem services and ground truthing of data.** Colin Tingle – Lewes & Ouse Valley Eco-nomics Group



See accompanying presentation 11

**Afternoon sessions: walk and talks**

Walk the Chalk from Jevington to Wilmington



South Downs Way National Trial – a key part of the access infrastructure of the country.

The national trail also forms the spine of the NIA.



### Environmental Stewardship - Value for Money?



Richard Brown, of Clapham Farm, Litlington spoke about the essential role of agri-environment funding.

His family have farmed the same area for generations and Richard has seen schemes evolve from Environmentally Sensitive Areas to HLS and now hoping that the New Scheme from renewed RDPE provides the support land managers need to secure positive benefits in line with the NIAs ambition.

### South Downs Way Visitor Payback Scheme

## Andy Gattiker, South Downs Way Ahead NIA



South Downs have reviewed the opportunities for visitor payback and opted to focus attention on charitable event organisers, where payment is made direct to the National Park as a flat fee. This reduces administration time and other overhead costs and keeps it real.

Further Information and resources:

### **Ecosystem Approach and Ecosystem Services Some Key Documents and Resources**

- Ecosystem Knowledge Network <http://ekn.defra.gov.uk/>
- Biodiversity & Ecosystem Service Sustainability (BESS) <http://www.nerc-bess.net/>
- Ecosystem Services Come to Town! European Urban Green Infrastructure Conference 2013 <http://ecosystemservicescometotown.com/>
- Ecosystem 2020 Vision film, musical and exhibition: <http://www.2020v.org/index.asp>
- Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology Note 377 - Ecosystem Approach (2011) <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/research/briefing-papers/POST-PN-377>
- Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology Note 281 - Ecosystem Services (2007) <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/research/briefing-papers/POST-PN-281>
- What nature can do for you A practical introduction to making the most of natural services, assets and resources in policy and decision making. Defra 2010 <http://archive.defra.gov.uk/environment/policy/natural-environ/documents/nature-do-for-you.pdf>

- Convention on Biological Diversity Ecosystem Approach Source Book <https://www.cbd.int/ecosystem/sourcebook/default.shtml>
- Defra Ecosystem Knowledge Network <http://ekn.defra.gov.uk>
- Natural England's National Character Area Profiles contain an analysis of the ecosystem services being delivered across England, divided into 159 areas. <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/publications/nca/default.aspx>
- Delivering the Ecosystem Approach on the ground, an evaluation of the upland Ecosystem Services pilots. NERR046 <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4084624?category=38019>

### Measuring and Monitoring Ecosystem Services

- Monitoring and Modelling of Ecosystem Services NECR073 (2011) <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/45009?category=38019>
- 'Measuring and Monitoring Ecosystem Services at the Site Scale' toolkit [http://www.unep-wcmc.org/a-toolkit-for-measuring-ecosystem-services-at-the-site-scale-is-released\\_751.html](http://www.unep-wcmc.org/a-toolkit-for-measuring-ecosystem-services-at-the-site-scale-is-released_751.html)

### Mapping Ecosystem Services

- Spatial framework for assessing evidence needs for operational ecosystem approaches Medcalf, K., Small, N., Finch, C. & Parker, J. (2012), JNCC Report 469 <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-6241>
- EcoServe-GIS Toolkit, Durham Wildlife Trust <http://www.durhamwt.co.uk/what-we-do/current-projects/ecoserv-project/>
- BESS Ecosystem Service Mapping Gateway <http://www.nerc-bess.net/ne-ess/>

### Valuing Ecosystem Services and PES

- Payments for Ecosystem Services: A Best Practice Guide. Smith, S., Rowcroft, P., Everard, M., Couldrick, L., Reed, M., Rogers, H., Quick, T., Eves, C. and White, C. (2013). Defra, London. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/payments-for-ecosystem-services-pes-best-practice-guide>
- Economic Valuation of Upland Ecosystem Services NECR029 (2009) <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/48003?category=38019>
- Valuing Ecosystem Services: Case Studies from Lowland England NECR101 <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/2319433?category=38019>
- Valuing nature's services: moving towards payments for ecosystem services and conservation credits in the English Uplands NE1036 (2013) <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6620042472980480?category=38019>
- The Local Environment and Economic Development (LEED) Toolkit is designed to help LEPs and LAs meet their economic growth targets by fully realising the roles the environment can play. <http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/planningdevelopment/LEP-citydeals/leedtoolkit.aspx>

- Bringing Ecosystem Services into Economic Decision-Making: Land Use in the United Kingdom. Ian J. Bateman *et al.* *Science* (2013) 341, 45.  
<http://www.sciencemag.org/content/341/6141/45.full.html>
- *Aeries* – <http://www.ariesonline.org/>
- Integrated Valuation of Environmental Services and Tradeoffs  
<http://www.naturalcapitalproject.org/InVEST.html>
- Data valuation resource EVRI  
<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/publications/evri.htm>

#### **Other**

- Haines-Young, R.H. and Potschin, M.B. (2009): Methodologies for defining and assessing ecosystem services. Final Report, JNCC, Project Code C08-0170-0062, 69 pp.  
[http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/cem/pdf/JNCC\\_Review\\_Final\\_051109.pdf](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/cem/pdf/JNCC_Review_Final_051109.pdf)
- Ecosystem Services from Environmental Stewardship that benefit agricultural production NECR102 (2012) <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/2322452?category=38019>
- Spatial Analysis and Prioritisation of Cultural Ecosystem Services: A Review of Methods Bianca Ambrose-Oji and Tim Pagella, (2012) Research Report, Forest Research. Alice Holt Lodge Farnham, Surrey.  
[http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/CES\\_spatial\\_analysis\\_tools\\_review\\_2102.pdf/\\$file/CES\\_spatial\\_analysis\\_tools\\_review\\_2102.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/CES_spatial_analysis_tools_review_2102.pdf/$file/CES_spatial_analysis_tools_review_2102.pdf)
- Managing soil biota to deliver ecosystem services NECR100 (2012)  
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/2748107?category=38019>

Ecosystem services : Exploring a geographical perspective Marion B. Potschin and Roy H. Haines-Young *Progress in Physical Geography* (2011) 35: 575 <http://ppg.sagepub.com/content/35/5/575>