

Evolution of the Principles and Practice of Agri-environment Evaluation

Clunie Keenleyside

Pärnu Estonia

17 June 2008

crex



© Natural England



© Natural England

challenges of agri-environment evaluation

role of evaluation 1985 - 2013

UK experience of the last 20 years

looking ahead

crex

Challenges of agri-environment evaluation

- habitat condition varies at entry
- biological systems are dynamic and subject to external influences
- time delay before impacts of intervention are observable
- voluntary uptake influenced by social and economic factors
- incentives tied to *process* not *product*

Role of evaluation 1985 - 2013

- 1985: optional for Member States, special schemes for sensitive areas
- 1992: 'accompanying measure', contributing to farm income and environment policy
- 1999: compulsory RDR measure to protect environment and improve countryside, according to need; evaluation required, using EU level indicators
- 2005: Axis 2 EAFRD, delivery of biodiversity targets, Natura 2000, Water Framework Directive, Kyoto; CMEF (progress, quality, changes needed)

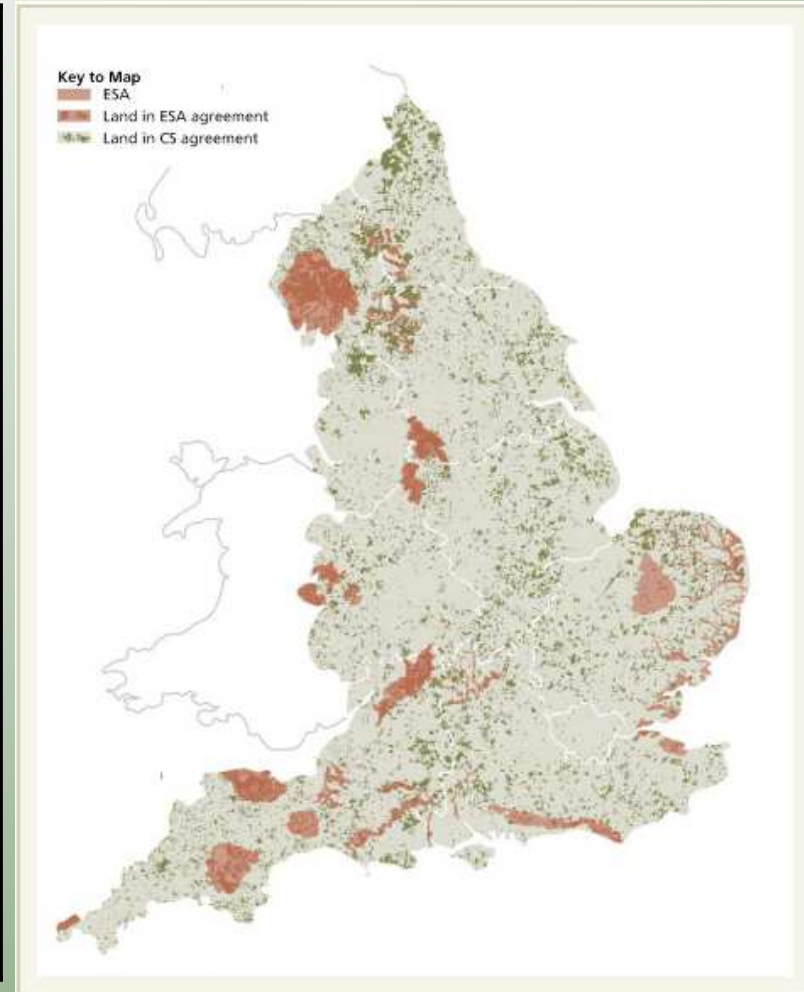
Characteristics of UK agri-environment schemes



- until 2005 all 'narrow and deep'
- wildlife + landscape + historic + access objectives
- maintenance, enhancement, restoration and creation
- menu-based (several tiers, including special projects)
- 10 year agreements
- detailed farm plans (prepared by adviser)
- evaluation obligatory (environmental effectiveness, VFM)

Development of schemes in England

ESAs 22 zones <i>(brown)</i>		1985
	COUNTRYSIDE STEWARDSHIP whole country 11 landscape and habitat features <i>(green)</i>	1991
ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP •entry level + organic (broad and shallow) •higher level (narrow and deep) <i>(whole country)</i>		2005



Environmentally Sensitive Areas 1985 - 2004

Protect special areas from agricultural threats

- 5 zones in 1985

Objectives widened to enhancement

- 22 zones by 1994 (10% UAA)

Each zone distinct (objectives, menu, delivery, evaluation)

High uptake (5 zones >75% eligible land)

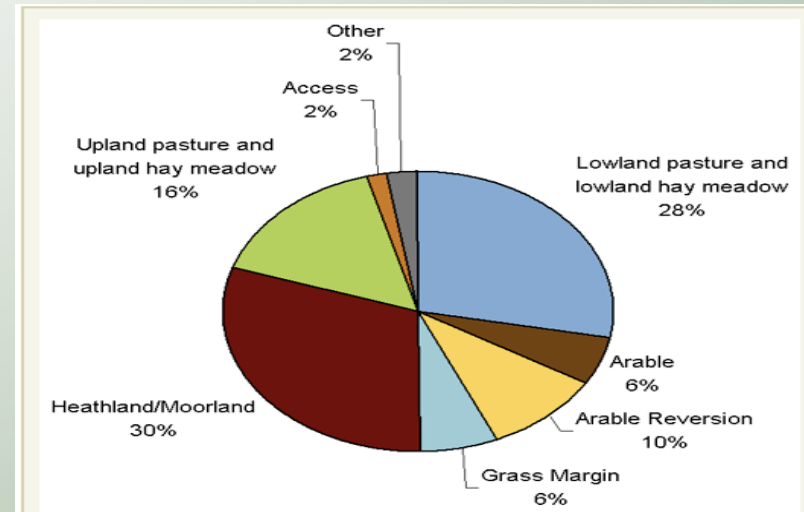
Evaluation structured by objectives (wildlife, biodiversity, historic, access)

Survey based, problems with PIs

Valuable 'case studies', refined management prescriptions and evaluation methodology

Countryside Stewardship Scheme

- 11 landscape or habitat features
- local targets for biodiversity, landscape, historic, access
- competitive entry
- lengthy pilot phase used to refine scheme design



Countryside Stewardship evaluation

1997 - 2000 evaluation in 2 modules:

- effectiveness of regional and national habitat targeting for Biodiversity Action Plans
- predictive evaluation of all objectives at contract (farm) level

CSS predictive contract evaluation

- 484 new contracts (14% of total signed in 1996-98)
- no PIs, objectives had been set at contract level
- 3 stages:
 - data collection for each contract
 - separate evaluation by experts in ecology, landscape and archaeology
 - multi-disciplinary team scoring against 5 criteria (negotiation, appropriateness, environmental effectiveness, compliance and side effects)
- good performance on biodiversity and landscape, poorer on historic

Policy review and consolidation 2002-03



Consolidate huge evidence base

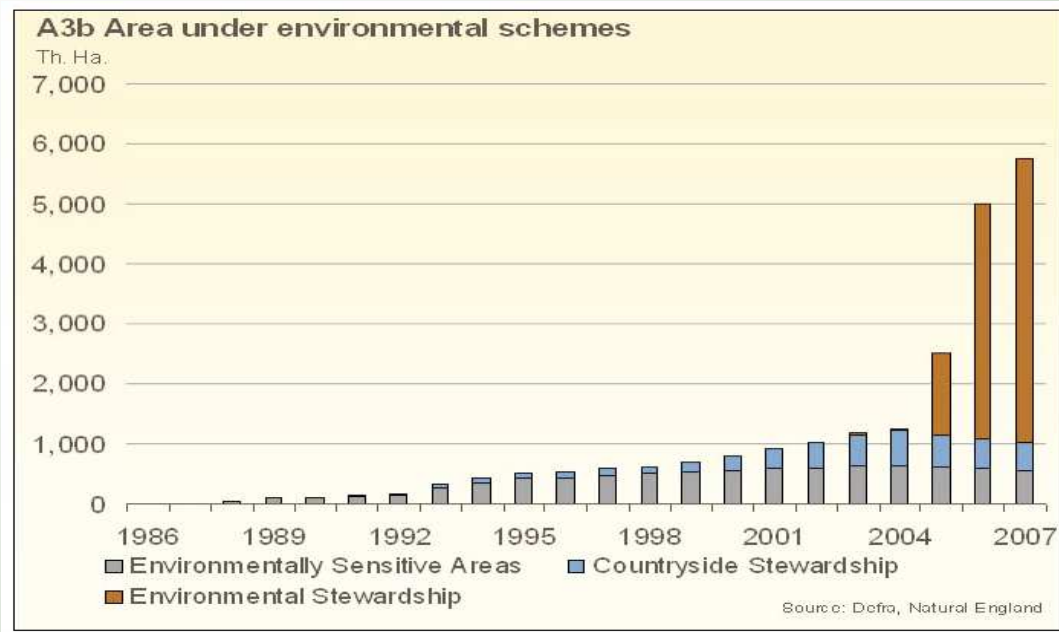
- environmental
- economic

Address need for wider coverage, resource protection

Funding issues - voluntary modulation

crex

Environmental Stewardship 2005 ⇒



2 tier scheme

- higher level replaced ESAs and CSS
- entry level for basic environmental management
- new objective - resource management

Evaluating Environmental Stewardship

- output and input PIs
 - environmental effectiveness
 - economic (efficiency and effects)
 - attitudes (farmers and the public)
- farm level objectives within Farm Environment Plan (HLS)
- contract-scale studies (calibrate CSS 10 years on?)
- site-specific surveys
- research studies
- using other national data sets
- resource protection - catchment scale?

Lessons learnt

- evaluation and schemes developed together
- management prescriptions and habitat targeting
- solving the time-lag problem
- we can design contract level Performance Indicators, but can we deliver them?
- making best use of resources for evaluation
- still learning!

Looking to the future

- external influences on farmer behaviour
- rewarding good practice, evaluating the additionality
- farm scale contracts, landscape scale impacts?
- are we talking to the right audience?



© Natural England

Thank you!

crex